

THE
REAL HISTORY
OF THE
ROSICRUCIANS

FOUNDED ON THEIR OWN MANIFESTOES,
AND ON FACTS AND DOCUMENTS COLLECTED FROM THE
WRITINGS OF INITIATED BRETHREN.

BY

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PREFACE.

BENEATH the broad tide of human history there flow the stealthy undercurrents of the secret societies, which frequently determine in the depths the changes that take place upon the surface. These societies have existed in all ages and among all nations, and tradition has invariably ascribed to them the possession of important knowledge in the religious scientific or political order according to the various character of their pretensions. The mystery which encompasses them has invested them with a magical glamour and charm that to some extent will account for the extravagant growth of legend about the Ancient Mysteries, the Templars, the Freemasons, and the Rosicrucians, above all, who were the most singular in the nature of their ostensible claims and in the uncertainty which envelopes them.

"A halo of poetic splendour," says Heckethorn,¹ "surrounds the Order of the Rosicrucians; the magic lights of fancy play round their graceful day-dreams, while the mystery in which they shrouded themselves lends additional attraction to their history. But their brilliancy was that of a meteor. It just flashed across the realms of imagination and intellect, and vanished for ever; not, however, without leaving behind some permanent and lovely traces of its hasty passage. . . . Poetry and romance are deeply

¹ "Secret Societies of all Ages and Countries."

indebted to the Rosicrucians for many a fascinating creation. The literature of every European country contains hundreds of pleasing fictions, whose machinery has been borrowed from their system of philosophy, though that itself has passed away."

The facts and documents concerning the Fraternity of the Rose Cross, or of the Golden and Rosy Cross, as it is called by Sigmund Richter,¹ are absolutely unknown to English readers. Even well-informed people will learn with astonishment the extent and variety of the Rosicrucian literature which hitherto has lain buried in rare pamphlets, written in the old German tongue, and in the Latin commentaries of the later alchemists. The stray gleams of casual information which may be gleaned from popular encyclopædias cannot be said to convey any real knowledge, while the essay of Thomas De Quincey on the "Rosicrucians and Freemasons," though valuable as the work of a sovereign prince of English prose composition, is a mere transcript from an exploded German savant, whose facts are tortured in the interests of a somewhat arbitrary hypothesis. The only writer in this country who claims to have treated the subject seriously and at length is Hargrave Jennings, who, in "*The Rosicrucians, their Rites and Mysteries*," &c., comes forward as the historian of the Order. This book, however, so far from affording any information on the questions it professes to deal with, "keeps guard over"² the secrets of the Fraternity, and is

¹ "*Die Warhafft und vollkommene, Bereitung des Philosophischen Steins, der Bruderschaft aus dem Orden des Gulden-und-Rosen Creutzes.*" 1710.

² "No student of occult philosophy need fear that we shall most carefully keep guard—standing sentry (so to speak) over those other and more recondite systems which are connected with our subject."

simply a mass of ill-digested erudition concerning Phallicism and Fire-Worship, the Round Towers of Ireland and Serpent Symbolism, offered with a charlatanic assumption of secret knowledge as an exposition of Rosicrucian philosophy.¹

The profound interest now manifested in all branches of mysticism, the tendency, in particular, of many cultured minds towards those metaphysical conceptions which are at the base of the alchemical system, the very general suspicion that other secrets than that of manufacturing gold are to be found in the Pandora's Box of Hermetic and Rosicrucian allegories,² make it evident that the time has come to collect the mass of material which exists for the elucidation of this curious problem of European history, and to depict the mysterious Brotherhood as they are revealed in their own manifestos and in the writings of those men who were directly or indirectly in connection with them. Such a publication will take the subject out of the hands of unqualified writers, and of the self-constituted pontiffs of darkness and mystery who trade upon the ignorance and curiosity of their readers.

As the result of conscientious researches, I have succeeded

¹ In reviewing an enlarged edition of this work, published in 1879, the *Westminster Review* remarks: "In the 'Rosicrucians' we have come across perhaps the most absurd book that it has ever been our fortune to review. . . . It affords a great deal of disjointed information on very many subjects, . . . but the one subject on which we have vainly sought information in its pages is the 'History of the Rosicrucians.' . . . The whole book is an absurd jumble of passages and illustrations, for most of which no authority is, or could be, given. And through the whole runs a very unwholesome under-current."—W. R. N. S., vol. lvi. p. 256.

² On this point see "A Suggestive Inquiry into the Hermetic Mystery and Alchemy," published anonymously in the year 1850, in London, and Hitchcock's "Remarks on Alchemy," also anonymous, New York, 1865.

in discovering several tracts and manuscripts in the Library of the British Museum, whose existence, so far as I am aware, has been unknown to previous investigators, while others, including different copies and accounts of the "Universal Reformation," as well as original editions of the "Chymical Marriage of Christian Rosy Cross," which are not in the Library Catalogue, though less generally obscure, I have met with in a long series of German pamphlets belonging to the first quarter of the seventeenth century. These, with all other important and available facts and documents, I have carefully collected and now publish them in the present volume, either summarised or *in extenso* according to their value, and I offer for the first time in the literature of the subject the Rosicrucians represented by themselves. I claim that I have performed my task in a sympathetic but impartial manner, purged from the bias of any particular theory, and above all uncontaminated by the pretension to superior knowledge, which claimants have never been able to substantiate.

INTRODUCTION.

"In cruce sub sphaera venit sapientia vera."—*Hermetic Axiom.*

"La rose qui a été de tout temps l'emblème de la beauté, de la vie, de l'amour et du plaisir, exprimait mystiquement toutes les protestations manifestées à la renaissance. . . . Réunir la rose, à la croix, tel était le problème posé par la Haute Initiation."—*Éliphas Lévi.*

THREE derivations are offered of the name Rosicrucian. The first, which is certainly the most obvious, deduces it from the ostensible founder of the order, Christian Rosenkreuze. I shall show, however, that the history of this personage is evidently mythical or allegorical, and therefore this explanation merely takes the inquiry a step backward to the question, What is the etymology of Rosenkreuze? The second derivation proposed is from the Latin words *Ros*, dew, and *Cruz*, cross. This has been countenanced by Mosheim, who is followed by Ree's *Encyclopædia*, and other publications. The argument in its favour may be fairly represented by the following quotation:—"Of all natural bodies, dew was deemed the most powerful dissolvent of gold; and the cross, in chemical language, was equivalent to light; because the figure of a cross exhibits at the same time the three letters of which the word *lux*, or light, is compounded. Now, *lux* is called . . . the seed or menstruum of the red dragon, or, in other words, that gross and corporeal light, which, when properly

digested and modified, produces gold. Hence it follows, if this etymology be admitted, that a Rosicrucian philosopher is one who by the intervention and assistance of the dew, seeks for light, or, in other words, the substance called the Philosopher's Stone."¹

This opinion exaggerates the importance attributed to the dew of the alchemists. The universal dissolvent has figured under various names, of which *ras* is by no means most general; the comprehensive "*Lexicon Alchymicæ*" does not mention it. According to Gaston le Doux, in his "*Dictionnaire Hermétique*," Dew, simply so called, signifies Mercury; Dew of the Philosophers is the matter of the stone when under the manipulation of the artist, and chiefly during its circulations in the philosophical egg. The White and Celestial Dew of the Wise is the philosophical stone perfected to the White. Mosheim derived his opinion from Peter Gassendi,² and from a writer in Eusebius Renaudot's "*Conférences Publiques*,"³ who confesses that he knew nothing whatsoever of the Rosicrucians till the task of speaking on the subject was imposed on him by the *Bureau d'Adresse*. He says:—"Dew, the most powerful dissolvent of gold which is to be found among natural and non-corrosive substances, is nothing else but light coagulated and rendered corporeal; when it is artistically concocted and digested in its own vessel during a suitable period it is the true menstruum of the Red Dragon, *i.e.*, of gold, the true matter of the Philosophers. The society desiring to bequeath to posterity the ineffaceable sign of this secret, caused them to adopt the name *Frères de la Rosée Cuite*." The mystic triad

¹ Mosheim, Book iv., sect. 1.

² "*Examen Philosophiæ Fluddanæ*," sect. 15, op. iii., 261.

³ "*Conférences du Bureau d'Adresse*," vol. v., p. 509.

of the Society, F. R. C., has been accordingly interpreted *Fratres Roris Cocti*, the Brotherhood of the Concocted or Exalted Dew, but the explanation has little probability in itself.

"Several chemists," says Pernetz, in his "Dictionnaire Mytho-Hermétique," "have regarded the dew of May and September as the matter of the *Magnum Opus*, influenced doubtless by the opinion of various authors that dew was the reservoir of the universal spirit of Nature. . . . But when we seriously study the texts of the true philosophers, wherein they make reference to dew, we are soon convinced that they only speak of it by a similitude, and that theirs is metallic, that is, it is the mercurial water sublimated into vapour within the vase, and precipitated at the bottom in the form of fine rain. Thus when they write of the dew of the month of May, they are referring to that of their philosophic Spring, which is governed by the gemini of the alchemical Zodiack, which differs from the ordinary astronomical Zodiack. Philalethes has positively said that their dew is their mercurial water rising from putrefaction."

The third derivation is that which was generally adopted, even from the beginning, by writers directly or indirectly connected with the Rosicrucians. It deduces the term in question from the words *rosa*, rose, and *crux*. This is sanctioned by various editions of the society's authoritative documents, which characterise it as the *Broederschaft des Roosen Creutzes*, that is, the Rose-Crucians, or *Fratres Rosatæ Crucis*, according to the "Confessio Recepta," terms quite excluding the conception of dew, which in German is *Thau*, while in Latin the Brothers of the Dewy Cross would be *Fratres Roratæ Crucis*. This derivation is also supported by the supposed symbol of the Order, whose "emblem,

monogram, or jewel," says Godfrey Higgins, "is a Red Rose on a Cross, thus :—



When it can be done it is surmounted with a glory and placed on a calvary. When it is worn appended and made of cornelian, garnet, ruby, or red glass, the calvary and glory are generally omitted."¹

Mr Hargrave Jennings, who borrows the whole of this passage² without acknowledgment of any kind, also tells us that "the jewel of the Rosicrucians is formed of a transparent red stone with a red cross on one side and a red rose on the other—thus it is a crucified rose."

All derivations, however, are to some extent doubtful and tentative. The official proclamations of the Society are contained in the "*Fama Fraternitatis*," and in the "*Confessio Fraternitatis*," which, in their original editions, appear to describe it simply as the *Fraternitas de R. C.*, while the initials of its founder are given as C. R. "*The Chemical Nuptials of Christian Rosen Kreuze*," published anonymously at Strasbourg in 1616, and undeniably connected with the order, seem to identify it as the Brotherhood of the Rose-Cross, and its founder as Father Rosycross. These designations at any rate were immediately adopted in Germany, and they appear in the subsequent editions of both mani-

¹ *Anacalypsis*, ii., p. 243.

² "*The Rosicrucians*," &c., p. 281. Ed. 1870.

festos, though as early as 1618 I find Michael Maier, the alchemist, expressing a different opinion on this point in his "*Themis Aurea, hoc est, De Legibus Fraternitatis R. C. Tractatus.*" "No long time elapsed, when the Society first became known by that which was written, before an interpreter came forward who conjectured those letters to signify the Rose Cross, in which opinion the matter remains till this present, notwithstanding that the Brothers in subsequent writings do affirm it to be erroneously so denominated, and testify that the letters R. C. denote the name of their first inaugurator.¹ If the mind of one man could search that of another and behold formed therein the idea or sensible and intelligible form, there would be no necessity for speech or writing among men. But this being denied to us while we subsist in this corporeal nature, though doubtless granted to pure intelligences, we explain our rational conceptions one to another by the symbols of language and writing. Therefore letters are of high efficacy when they embrace a whole society and maintain order therein, nor is an opportunity afforded to the curious to draw omens from integral names, nor from families situations, nor from places persons, nor from persons the secrets of affairs."

Proposing his own definitions, he says:—"I am no augur nor prophet, notwithstanding that once I partook of the laurel, and reposed a few brief hours in the shadow of Parnassus; nevertheless, if I err not, I have unfolded the significance of the characters R. C. in the enigmas of the sixth book of the Symbols of the Golden Table. R signifies Pegasus, and C, if the sense not the sound be considered,

¹ The "*Fama Fraternitatis*" makes use of the initials C. R., afterwards of R. C., C. R. C., &c., to designate their founder.

lilium. Let the KNOWLEDGE OF THE ARCANA be the key to thee. Lo, I give thee the Arcanum ! d. wmm. zii. w. sgqqhka. x. Open if thou canst. . . . Is not this the hoof of the Red Lion or the drops of the Hippocrene fountain ?" Beneath this barbarous jargon we discern, however, an analogy with the Rose symbolism. Classical tradition informs us that the Red Rose sprang from the blood of Adonis, but Pegasus was a winged horse which sprang from the blood of Medusa, and the fountain of Hippocrene was produced by a stroke of the hoof of Pegasus.

In England the pseudonymous author of the "*Summum Bonum*," who is supposed to be Robert Fludd, gives a purely religious explanation of the Rose Cross symbol, asserting it to mean "the Cross sprinkled with the rosy blood of Christ."¹ The general consensus of opinion is preferable to fanciful interpretations, and we may therefore safely take the words *Rosa* and *Cruz* as explanatory of the name Rosicrucian, and by *Fratres R. C.* we may understand *Fratres Rosæ Crucis*, despite the silence of the manifestos and the protests of individual alchemists.

The next question which occurs is the significance of this curious emblem—a Red Rose affixed to a red, or, according to some authors, a golden cross. This question cannot be definitely answered. The characteristic sign of a secret society will be naturally as mysterious as itself in the special meaning which the society may attach to it, but some intelligence concerning it can perhaps be gleaned from its analysis with universal symbolism. Now, the Rose and the Cross, in their separate significance, are emblems of the most palmary importance and the highest antiquity.

¹ Elsewhere he interprets the letters F.R.C. to mean Faith, Religion, and Charity. See Renandot, "*Conferences Publiques*," v., p. 509.

There is a Silver Rose, called Tamara Pua, in the Paradise of the Brahmans. "This Paradise is a garden in heaven, to which celestial spirits are first admitted on their ascent from the terrestrial sphere. The Rose contains the images of two women, as bright and fair as a pearl; but these two are only one, though appearing as if distinct according to the medium, celestial or terrestrial, through which they are viewed. In the first aspect she is called the Lady of the Mouth, in the other, the Lady of the Tongue, or the Spirit of Tongues. In the centre of this Silver Rose, God has his permanent residence."

A correspondence will be readily recognised between this divine woman or virgin—two and yet one, who seems to typify the Logos, the Spirit of Wisdom, and the Spirit of Truth—and the two-edged sword of the Spirit in the Apocalypse, the *Sapientia quæ ex ore Altissimi prodiit*, as it is called in the sublime Advent antiphon of the Latin Church. The mystical Rose in the centre of the allegorical garden is continually met with in legend. Buddha is said to have been crucified for robbing a garden of a flower,¹ and after a common fashion of mythology, the divine Avatar of the Indians is henceforth identified with the object for which he suffered, and he becomes himself "a flower, a Rose, a Padma, Lotus, or Lily." Thus he is the Rose crucified, and we must look to the far East for the origin of the Rosicrucian emblem. According to Godfrey Higgins, this is "the Rose of Isuren, of Tamul, and of Sharon, crucified for the salvation of men—crucified," he continues, "in the heavens at the vernal equinox." In this connection we may remember the

¹ The same story is told of Indra, who was crucified by the keepers of the Hindoo Paradise for having robbed it.

Gnostic legend that Christ was crucified in the Empyrean ; and as Nazareth, according to St Jerome, signified the flower, and was situated in Carmel, "the vineyard or garden of God," Jesus of Nazareth, by a common extension of the symbolism, is sometimes identified as this crucified flower.¹

In classical fable, the garden of Midas, the King of the Phrygians, was situated at the foot of Mount Bermion, and was glorified by the presence of roses with sixty petals, which exhaled an extraordinary fragrance. Now, the rose was sacred to Dionysius, or Bacchus, and Bacchus endowed Midas with the power of transmuting everything into gold ; so here is a direct connection between the Rose and Alchemy.

In the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, Lucius is restored to his human shape by devouring a chaplet of roses. Everywhere the same typology meets us. The Peruvian Eve sinned by plucking roses, which are also called *Frute del Arbor*.² A messenger from heaven announces to the Mexican Eve that she will bear a Son who shall bruise the serpent's head ; he presents her with a Rose, and this gift was followed by an Age of Roses, as in India there was the Age of the Lotus.

There are occasional allusions to the Rose in the Hebrew Scriptures, but it is used as a poetic image rather than an arcane symbol, and as such it has been always in high favour with poets.³

¹ Professor Max Müller considers the word *phōs* to be Aryan, and originally to have meant simply a sprig or flower.

² "Mexican Antiquities," vol. vi., p. 120.

³ In Persia it is connected with the nightingale. "Tradition says that the bird utters a plaintive cry whenever the flower is gathered, and that it will hover round the plant in the spring-time, till, overpowered with its fragrance, it falls senseless to the ground. The Rose is supposed to burst forth from its bud at the opening song of the nightingale. You may place a handful of fragrant herbs

In the west it appears for the first time in allegorical literature as the central figure in the "four-square garden" of the ancient "Romance of the Rose." The first part of this poem was written by Guillaume de Lorris before the year 1260, and it was completed by Jean de Meung, whose death occurred in the year 1316, according to the general opinion. This extraordinary work, once of universal popularity, is supposed by some of its commentators to admit of an alchemical interpretation, and openly professes the principles of the *Magnum Opus*.¹ The garden, or *vergier*, which contains the Rose, is richly sculptured on its outer walls with symbolical figures of Hatred, Treason, Meanness, Covetousness, Avarice, Envy, Sadness, Age, Hypocrisy, Poverty—all the vices and miseries of mortality. Idleness opens the gate to him, Merriment greets him and draws him into the dance, and then he beholds the God of Love, accompanied by *Dous-Regars*, a youth who carries his bows and arrows, by Beauty, Wealth, Bounty, Frankness, Courtesy, &c. The lover, while he is contemplating the loveliness of the Rose,

Qui est si vermeille et si fine . . .
Des foilles i ot quatre paire,
Que Nature par grand mestire
I ot saises tire a tire.

and flowers before the nightingale," say the Persian poets. "Yet he wishes not, in his constant and faithful heart, for more than the sweet breath of his beloved Rose."—Friend, "Flowers and Flower Lore." There is a Persian Feast of Roses, which lasts the whole time the flower is in bloom.

¹ See in particular the verses 16914 to 16997, and the speech of Genius.

"Jean de Meung," says Langlet du Fresnoy in his "*Histoire de la Philosophie Hermétique*," flourished at the Court and at Paris in the pontificate of John XXII., and according to the fashion of the times was addicted to the curious sciences, and in particular to Hermetic Philosophy. He composed two treatises called "Nature's Remonstrances to the Alchemist," and "The Alchemist's Answer to Nature."

Le coe ot droite comme jone,
 Et par dessus siet li boutons,
 Si qu'il ne cline ne ne pent.
 L' odor de lui entor s' espent :
 La seotisme qui en ist,
 Toute la place replenist.¹

is pierced by the shafts of the deity, but he does not in spite of his sufferings abandon his project, which is to possess the Rose, and after imprisonment and various adventures,

La conclusion du Rommant
 Est que vous voyez cy l'Amant
 Qui prent la Rose à son plaisir,
 En qui estoit tout son désir.

It will require no acquaintance with the methods of the symbolists to discern the significance of this allegory:—

*La Rose c'est d'Amour le guerdon gracieux.*²

But a little later the same emblem reappears in the sublime poem of Dante. The Paradise of the *Divina Commedia*

¹ Amongst the knoppes I chese one
 So faire, that of the remnant none
 Ne preise I halfe so well as it,
 Whan I avise in my wit,
 For it so well was enlumined
 With colour red, as well fined
 As nature could it make faire,
 And it hath leaves well fourre paire,
 That kinde hath set through his knowing
 About the red roses springing,
 The stalke was as rishe right,
 And thereon stood the knoppe upright.
 That it ne bowed upon no side,
 The swote smell sprung so wide,
 That it died all the place about.

CHAUCKE, "The Romaunt of the Rose."

² Baif—"Sonnet to Charles IX."

consists, says Eliphas Lévi, of "a series of Kabbalistic circles divided by a Cross, like Ezekiel's pantacle ; a Rose blossoms in the centre of this Cross, and it is for the first time that we find the symbol of the Rosicrucians publicly and almost categorically revealed."

The passage referred to, so far as regards the Rose, is as follows :—

" There is in heaven a light, whose goodly shine
 Makes the Creator visible to all
 Created, that in seeing him alone
 Have peace ; and in a circle spreads so far,
 That the circumference were too loose a zone
 To girdle in the sun. All is one beam,
 Reflected from the summit of the first,
 That moves, which being hence and vigour takes,
 And as some cliff, that from the bottom eyes
 His image mirror'd in the crystal flood,
 As if to admire his brave apparelling
 Of verdure and of flowers ; so, round about,
 Eyeing the light, on more than million thrones,
 Stood, eminent, whatever from our earth
 Has to the skies return'd. How wide the leaves
 Extended to their utmost, of this Rose,
 Whose lowest step embosoms such a space
 Of ample radiance ! Yet, nor amplitude
 Nor height impeded, but my view with ease
 Took in the full dimension of that joy.
 Near or remote, what then avails, *where God*
*Immediate rules,*¹ and Nature, awed, suspends
 Her sway ? Into the yellow of the Rose
 Perennial, which, in bright expansiveness,
 Lays forth its gradual blooming, redolent
 Of praises to the never-wintering sun. . . .
 Beatrice led me. . . .

¹ Compare the Oriental legend, previously cited, of that Silver Rose in which God has His permanent residence. It is an extraordinary instance of identity in the celestial symbolism of East and West.

In fashion as a snow-white Rose lay then
 Before my view the saintly multitude,
 Which in his own blood Christ espoused. Meanwhile
 That other host that soar aloft to gaze
 And celebrate His glory whom they love,
 Hovered around, and like a troop of bees
 Amid the vernal sweets alighting now,
 Now clustering where their fragrant labour glows,
 Flew downward to the mighty flower ; a rose
 From the redundant petals streaming back
 Unto the steadfast dwelling of their joy.
 Faces had they of flame, and wings of gold :
 The rest was whiter than the driven snow.
 And as they flitted down into the flower,
 From range to range fanning their plumy loins,
 Whispered the peace and ardour which they won
 From that soft winnowing. Shadow none, the vast
 Interposition of such numerous flights
 Cast from above, upon the flower, or view
 Obstructed aught. For through the Universe
 Wherever merited, Celestial Light
 Glides freely, and no obstacle prevents.

CARY'S DANTE, "The Paradise," xxx., xxxi.

"Not without astonishment will it be discovered," continues Lévi, "that the *Roman de la Rose* and the Divine Comedy are two opposite forms of the same work—initiation into intellectual independence, satire on all contemporary institutions and allegorical formulations of the great secrets of the Rosicrucian Society. These important manifestations of occultism coincide with the epoch of the downfall of the Templars, since Jean de Meung or Clopinel, contemporary of Dante's old age, flourished during his most brilliant years at the Court of Philippe le Bel. The 'Romance of the Rose' is the epic of ancient France. It is a profound work in a trivial guise, as learned an exposition of the mysteries of occultism as that of Apuleius. The Rose of Flamel, of Jean de Meung, and of Dante, blossomed on the same rose-tree."

This is ingenious and interesting, but it assumes the point in question, namely, the antiquity of the Rosicrucian Fraternity, which, it is needless to say, cannot be proved by the mere existence of their symbols in the mystical poetry of a remote period. In the Paradise of Dante we find, however, the emblem whose history we are tracing, placed, and assuredly not without reason, in the supreme, central heaven amidst the intolerable manifestation of the Uncreated Light, the Shecinah of Rabbinical theosophy,¹ the chosen habitation of God—"a sacred Rose and Flower of Light, brighter than a million suns, immaculate, inaccessible, vast, fiery with magnificence, and surrounding God as if with a million veils. This symbolic Rose is as common a hierogram throughout the vast temples and palaces of the Ancient East as it is in the immense ruins of Central America."²

From the time of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines a common device in heraldry is the Rose-Emblem. It figures on our English coins; it is used as a royal badge in the Civil War between the houses of York and Lancaster, it is associated above all with the great mediæval cultus of the Mother of God, being our Lady's flower *par excellence*, as the lily is characteristic of St Joseph. "As an emblem of the Virgin, the Rose, both white and red, appears at a very early period; it was especially so recognised by St Dominic, when he instituted the devotion of the rosary, with direct reference to St Mary. The prayers appear to have been symbolised as roses."³ In Scandinavia the same flower was sacred to the goddess Holda, who is called "Frau

¹ See Additional Notes, No. 1.

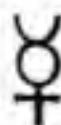
² "The Book of God," part iii., p. 511.

³ Hilderic Friend, "Flowers and Flower-Lore."

Rosa," and "it was partly transferred, as were other emblems of Holda, Freyja, and Venus, to the Madonna, who is frequently called by the Germans, Mariën-Röschen . . . But there has been a tendency to associate the White Rose with the Virgin Mary, that being chiefly chosen for her feast-days, while the more earthly feelings associated with the 'Frau Rosa,' are still represented in the superstitions connected with the Red Rose."

In Germany it appears as the symbol of silence. It was sculptured on the ceiling of the banquet hall to warn the guests against the repetition of what was heard beneath it. "The White Rose was especially sacred to silence. It was carved in the centre of the Refectory of the ancients for the same reason," and the expression *Sub Rosa*, which was equivalent among the Romans to an inviolable pledge, originated in the ancient dedication of the flower to Aphrodite, and its reconsecration by Cupid to Harpocrates, the tutelary deity of Silence, to induce him to conceal the amours of the goddess of love.

In mediæval alchemy Rosa signifies Tartarum, and in the twelfth Clavis of Basil Valentine there is a vase or yoni with a pointed lingam rising from its centre, and having on each side a sprig surmounted by a Rose. Above is the well-known emblem



which symbolises the accomplishment of the *Magnum Opus*, while through an open window the sun and moon shed down their benign influence and concur in the consummation of the ineffable act.¹

¹ See Additional Notes, No. 2.

The same Rose-symbol is to be found in the hieroglyphics of Nicholas Flamel—

The mystic Rose
Of Hermic lore, which issues bright and fair,
Strange virtues circling with the sap therein,
Beneath the Universal Spirit's breath,
From the Mercurial Stone.

Finally, in 1598, Henry Khunrath, a supreme alchemical adept, published his "*Amphitheatrum Sapientiæ Æternæ*," containing nine singular pantacles, of which the fifth is a Rose of Light, in whose centre there is a human form extending its arms in the form of a cross, and thus reversing the order.

The Cross is a hierogram of, if possible, still higher antiquity than the floral emblem. It is at any rate more universal and contains a loftier and more arcane significance. Its earliest form is the *Cruz Ansata*,



which, according to some authorities, signified hidden wisdom, and the life of the world to come; according to others, it is the lingam; as the hieroglyphic sign of Venus it is an ancient allegorical figure, and represents the metal copper in alchemical typology. The *Cruz Ansata* and the Tau



are met with on most Egyptian monuments. In the latter form it was an emblem of the creative and generative energy, and, according to Payne Knight, was, even in pre-Christian times, a sign of salvation.

The Cross, "the symbol of symbols," was used also by the Chaldæans ; by the Phœnicians, who placed it on their coins ; by the Mexicans, who paid honour to it and represented their God of the Air, nailed and immolated thereon ; by the Peruvians, who, in a sacred chamber of their palace, kept and venerated a splendid specimen carved from a single piece of fine jasper or marble ; and by the British Druids. It was emblazoned on the banners of Egypt, and in that country, as in China, was used to indicate "a land of corn and plenty." When divided into four equal segments it symbolised the primeval abode of man, the traditional Paradise of Eden. It entered into the monograms of Osiris, of Jupiter Ammon, and of Saturn ; the Christians subsequently adopted it, and the Labarum of Constantine is identical with the device of Osiris. It is equally common in India, and, according to Colonel Wilford, is exactly the Cross of the Manichees, with leaves, flowers, and fruits springing from it. It is called the divine tree, the tree of the gods, the tree of life and knowledge, and is productive of all things good and desirable. ¹

According to Godfrey Higgins we must go to the Buddhists for the origin of the Cross, "and to the Lama of Thibet, who takes his name from the Cross, called in his language Lamh." The Jamba, or cosmic tree, which Wilford calls the tree of life and knowledge, figures in their maps of the "world as a cross 84 joganas (answering to the 84 years of the life of Him who was exalted upon the Cross), or 423 miles high, including the three steps of the Calvary, with which, after the orthodox Catholic

¹ "Asiatic Researches," x. 124. The pre-Christian cross is not infrequently associated with a tree or trees. Balfour, "Cyclop. of India," i., p. 891.

fashion, it was invariably represented. The neophyte of the Indian Initiations was sanctified by the sign of a Cross, which was marked on every part of his body. After his perfect regeneration it was again set upon his forehead **T** and inverted **I** upon his breast.¹

The paschal lamb of the Jewish passover was roasted on a cross-shaped wooden spit, and with this sign Ezekiel ordered the people to be marked who were to be spared by the destroyer. Thus it figures as a symbol of salvation, but classical mythology attributes its invention to Ixion, who was its first victim. As an instrument of suffering and death, it is not, however, to be found on ancient monuments. It had no orthodox shape among the Romans when applied to this purpose, and the victims were either tied or nailed, "being usually left to perish by thirst and hunger." "

In the Christendom of both the East and West this divine symbol has a history too generally known to need recapitulation here. On this point the student may consult the "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities," where a mass of information is collected.

The following interesting passage will show the connection which exists between the Cross and alchemy. "In common chemistry," says Pernetz, "crosses form characters which indicate the crucible, vinegar, and distilled vinegar. But as regards hermetic science, the Cross is . . . the symbol of the four elements. And as the philosophical stone is composed of the most pure substance of the grosser elements . . . , they have said, *In cruce salus*, salvation is in the Cross; by comparison with the salvation of our souls purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ who hung on the

¹ "History of Initiations."

² Higgins' "Anacalypsis," i., pp. 500, 503.

tree of the Cross. Some of them have even pushed their audacity further, and fear not to employ the terms of the New Testament to form their allegories and enigmas. Jean de Roquetaillade, known under the name of *Jean de Rupe Scissa*, and Arnaud de Villeneuve, say in their works on the composition of the Stone of the Philosophers :—It is needful that the Son of Man be lifted up on the Cross before being glorified ; to signify the volatilisation of the fixed and igneous part of the matter."¹

I have briefly traced the typological history of the Rose and Cross. It is obvious, as I have already remarked, that the antiquity of these emblems is no proof of the antiquity of a society which we find to be using them at a period subsequent to the Renaissance. It does not even suppose that society's initiation into the hieratic secrets which the elder world may have summarised in those particular symbols. In the case which is in question, such a knowledge would involve the antiquity of the Rosicrucians, because it is only at a time long subsequent to their first public appearance that the past has been sufficiently disinterred to uncover the significance of its symbols to uninitiated students. Can a correspondence be established between the meaning of the Rose and the Cross as they are used by the ancient hierogrammatists, and that of the Rose-Cross as it is used by the Rosicrucian Fraternity ? This is the point to be ascertained. If a connection there be, then in some way, we may not know what, the secret has been handed down from generation to generation, and the mysterious brotherhood which manifested its existence spontaneously at the beginning of the seventeenth century, is affiliated with the hierophants of Egypt and India, who,

¹ "Dictionnaire Mytho-Hermétique."

almost in the night of time, devised their allegories and emblems for the blind veneration of the vulgar and as lights to those who knew.

In the fifth book of the "*Histoire de la Magie*," Eliphas Lévi provides the following commentary on the Rosicrucian symbol:—

"The Rose, which from time immemorial has been the symbol of beauty and life, of love and pleasure, expressed in a mystical manner all the protestations of the Renaissance. It was the flesh revolting against the oppression of the spirit, it was Nature declaring herself to be, like grace, the daughter of God, it was love refusing to be stifled by the celibate, it was life desiring to be no longer barren, it was humanity aspiring to a natural religion, full of love and reason, founded on the revelation of the harmonies of existence of which the Rose was for initiates the living and blooming symbol. The Rose, in fact, is a pantacle; its form is circular, the leaves of the corolla are heart-shaped, and are supported harmoniously by one another; its colour presents the most delicate shades of primitive hues; its calyx is purple and gold. . . . The conquest of the Rose was the problem offered by initiation to science, while religion toiled to prepare and establish the universal, exclusive, and definitive triumph of the Cross.

"The reunion of the Rose and the Cross, such was the problem proposed by supreme initiation, and, in effect, occult philosophy, being the universal synthesis, should take into account all the phenomena of Being."

This extremely suggestive explanation has the characteristic ingenuity of the hierophants of theosophical science, but it has no application whatsoever to the ostensible or

ascertainable aims of the Rosicrucian adepts. It is the product of intellectual subtlety and the poetic gift of discerning curious analogies ; it is quite beside the purpose of serious historical inquiry, and my object in quoting it here is to show by the mere fact of its existence that the whole question of the significance of the Crucified Rose, in its connection with the society, is one of pure conjecture, that no Rosicrucian manifestos and no acknowledged Brother have ever given any explanation concerning it, and that no presumption is afforded by the fact of its adoption for the antiquity of the society or for its connection with universal symbolism.

The researches of various writers, all more or less competent, have definitely established the *Cruz Ansata* as typical of the male and female generative organs in the act of union, the Egyptian Tau, with its variants as typical of the masculine potency, and the Rose as the feminine emblem. Then by a natural typological evolution the Cross came to signify the divine creative energy which fecundated the obscure matrix of the primeval substance and caused it to bring forth the universe. The simple union of the Rose and the Cross suggests the same meaning as the *Cruz Ansata*, but the crucified Buddhistic Rose may be a symbol of the asceticism which destroys natural desire. There is little correspondence, in either case, with known Rosicrucian tenets, and, therefore, the device of the Rose-Cross is separated from ancient symbolism, and is either a purely arbitrary and thus unexplainable sign, or its significance is to be sought elsewhere.

Now, I purpose to show that the Rosicrucians were united with a movement, which, originating in Germany, was destined to revolutionise the world of thought and to

transform the face of Europe ; that the symbols of the Rose and the Cross were prominently and curiously connected with this movement, and that the subsequent choice of these emblems by the secret society in question, followed naturally from the fact of this connection, and is easily explainable thereby. To accomplish this task satisfactorily, I must first lay before my readers the facts and documents which I have collected concerning the Fraternity.

HISTORY OF THE ROSICRUCIANS.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE STATE OF MYSTICAL PHILOSOPHY IN GERMANY AT THE CLOSE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

THE traditions of the Neo-Platonic philosophy, with its elaborate theurgical system, were to some extent perpetuated through the whole period of the Middle Ages, for beside the orthodox theology of the great Latin Church, and amidst the clamour of scholastic philosophy, we find the secret theosophy of the magician, the Kabbalist, and the alchemical adept borrowing, directly or indirectly, from this prolific fountain of exalted mysticism. The traces of its influence are discoverable in Augustine, in Albertus Magnus, in St Thomas, the angel of the schools, and in other shining lights of western Christendom, while the metaphysical principles of Johannes Scotus Erigena, even so early as the close of the ninth century, were an actual revival of this philosophy. He translated the extraordinary works of Pseudo-Dionysius on the celestial hierarchies, the divine names, &c., which were an application of Platonism to Christianity,¹ "and proved a rich mine to the mystics."

¹ Tenneman's "Manual of the History of Philosophy," ed. Bohn, p. 207.

This translation was largely circulated and held in the highest repute, more especially in Germany, where the Areopagite was appealed to as an authority by Eckhart at the beginning of the fourteenth century. At this time Germany was a stronghold of mysticism, which, according to Ueberweg,¹ was at first chiefly developed in sermons by monks of the Dominican Order; its aim was to advance Christianity by edifying speculation, and to render it comprehensible by the transcendent use of the reason. "The author and perfecter of this entire development was Master Eckhart," who taught that the creature apart from the Absolute, that is, from God, was nothing, that "time, space, and the plurality which depends on them," are also nothing in themselves, and that "the duty of man as a moral being is to rise beyond this nothingness of the creature, and by direct intuition to place himself in immediate union with the Absolute."²

Eckhart was followed by Tauler, a great light of German mysticism, and one profoundly versed in the mysteries of the spiritual and interior life. A century later, with the revival of Platonism, came the Cardinal Nicolas Cusanus, "a man of rare sagacity, and an able mathematician, who arranged and republished the Pythagorean ideas, to which he was much inclined, in a very original manner, by the aid of his mathematical knowledge."³ This representative of the mysticism of Eckhart provided Giordano Bruno with the fundamental principles of his sublime and poetical conceptions. Bruno "renewed the theory of numbers, and gave a detailed explanation of the decadal system. With him, God is the great unity which is developed in the

¹ "Hist. of Phil. Trans.," Morris, I., p. 468.

² *Ibid.*, p. 469.

³ Tenneman, p. 257.

world and in humanity, as unity is developed in the indefinite series of numbers."¹

The death of Giordano Bruno in the year 1600 brings us to a period of palmary importance and interest in the history of religion, science, and philosophy. The revival of learning had for some two centuries been illuminating and enlarging the intellectual horizon of Europe; the Reformation was slowly removing in several countries those checks which had hindered freedom of inquiry on most speculative subjects; that which had been practised in the privacy of the study might be displayed almost on the house top, that which had been whispered at the Sabbath of the Sorcerers could be canvassed with impunity in the market place. The spirit of the age which had dethroned the crucifix, burnt candles before the busts of Plato and Plotinus. The revolution in theology was followed by a general revolt against the old philosophical authorities, the seeds of which revolt must be looked for at the time when Aristotle and the Peripatetic successors were enthroned upon the ashes of the scholiasts, who pretending to follow Aristotle, had perverted and disfigured his doctrines. As the birthplace of the Reformation, Germany enjoyed a greater share of intellectual unrestraint than any other country of Europe, and it was a chaos of conflicting opinions on all debateable topics. The old lines were loosened, the old tests failing, the chain of tradition was breaking at every point, a spirit of restless feverish inquiry was abroad, and daily new facts were exploding old methods. Copernicus had revolutionised astronomy by his discovery of the true solar system, Galileo already had invented the thermometer, and was on the threshold of a glorious future; a century

¹ Cousin, "*Course of the Hist. of Mod. Phil.*," ii., p. 48.

previously Columbus had opened the still illimitable vistas of the western world ; great minds were appearing in every country ; amidst a thousand blunders, the independent study of the Bible was pursued with delight and enthusiasm, and in every city the hearts of an emancipated people were glowing with hope and expectation at the promise of the future.

Now, in an age of progress, of doubt, and of great intellectual activity, it is singular to remark the almost invariable prevalence of mysticism in one or other of its manifold phases, and the close of the sixteenth century beheld spreading over the whole of Germany and passing thence into Denmark, France, England, and Italy, a mighty school of mysticism in the great multitude of magicians, alchemists, &c., who directly or indirectly were followers of the renowned Paracelsus.

The sublime drunkard of Hohenheim, the contemporary of Agrippa, but grander in his aspirations, vaster in his capacities, and, if possible, still more unfortunate than the brilliant pupil of Trithemius, was the intellectual product of the great school of Kabbalism represented by Reuchlin and Picus de Mirandola. He united to his theoretical knowledge of theosophical mysteries an unrivalled practical acquaintance with every form of magic, and was as much an innovator in occult science as a reformer in medicine. For all orthodox alchemists, magicians, and professors of hidden knowledge, Paracelsus is a grand hierophant second only to the traditional Hermes. His brief and turbulent career closed tragically in the year 1541, but the works which he left secured him a vast posthumous audience, and the audacity of his speculations were undoubtedly instrumental in the emancipation of the German mind from the influence of traditional authority.

At the close of the sixteenth century, then, we find the disciples of Paracelsus seeking, after the principles of their master and by the light of experimental research :—1. The secret of the transmutation of metals, or of the *magnum opus*, and applying to chemistry the usages of Kabbalism and ancient astrology.¹ 2. The universal medicine, which included the Catholicon, or Elixir of Life and the Panacea, the first insuring to its possessor the prolongation or perpetuity of existence, the second restoring strength and health to debilitated or diseased organisms. 3. The Philosophic Stone,² the great and universal synthesis which conferred upon the adept a sublimer knowledge than that of transmutation or of the Great Elixir, but on which both of these were dependent.³ "This stone," says a modern writer, who fairly interprets the more exalted and spiritual side of Hermetic traditions, "is the foundation of absolute philosophy ; it is the supreme and immoveable reason. . . . To find the Philosophic Stone is to have discovered the Absolute,"⁴

¹ "If thou comprehendest not the practices of Kabbalists and the primeval astrologers, God has not made thee for the spagirik, nor has nature elected thee for the operation of Vulcan."—Paracelsus, "De Tinctura Physicorum."

² "There is a great difference between the Stone of the *Philosophers* and the *Philosophick* Stone. The first is the Subject of *Philosophy*, considered in the state of its first Preparation, in which it is truly a stone, since it is solid, hard, heavy, brittle, frangible. . . . The *Philosophick* Stone is the same Stone of the *Philosophers*; when by the secret magistrery it is exalted to the perfection of the third order, transmuting all imperfect metals into pure gold or silver, according to the nature of the ferment adjoined to it."—"The Hermetical Triumph."

³ The base metals are transmuted into perfect gold by the possessor of the Philosophick Stone, and the Elixir of Life, according to Bernard Trévisan, is the resolution of the same stone into mercurial water, which is also the *aurum potabile* of the wise.

⁴ Eliphas Lévi, "Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie ;" "Mysteries of Magic," pp. 199, 201.

that is, the true *raison d'être* of all existences. Thus the initiate aspired to that infallible knowledge and wisdom which is afforded by divine illumination, his search for which is sometimes spoken of as the search for the quadrature of the circle, that is, for the extent or area of all sciences human and divine.

Among the concourse of inquirers, and the clamour of supposed and pretended discoverers, there rose gradually into deserved prominence an advanced school of illuminati, who, employing the terminology of the *turba philosophorum*, under the pretence of alchemical pursuits appear to have concealed a more exalted aim. The chief representative of this sect at the end of the sixteenth century was Henry Khunrath, and the work in which its principles are most adequately expressed is the "*Amphitheatrum Sapientiæ Æternæ*." The student is directed by these writers from the pursuit of material gold to the discovery of incorruptible and purely spiritual treasures, and they pretend to provide a mystical key or *Introitus apertus* to the "closed Palace of the King," in which these treasures are contained. Physical transmutation, the one and supreme end of the practical alchemist, sinks into complete insignificance; nevertheless, it is performed by the adept and is a landmark in his sublime progress. Rejecting the material theory even for this inferior process, they declare its attainment impossible for the unspiritual man, and just as the alchemical nomenclature is made use of in a transfigured sense, so the terminology of metaphysics appears to be pressed into the service of a conception far transcending the notions commonly conveyed by the words wisdom, spirituality, &c.

The result of this singular division in the camp of the alchemists was the inevitable mental confusion of that great

crowd of inquirers into the secrets of nature who formed the audience of professional adepts. Every year books and pamphlets were issued from the German press, and purported to contain the secret of the *Magnum Opus*, expressed for the first time in plain, unmistakeable terms, but no writer proved more intelligible than his predecessors ; the student, surrounded by authors whose search had been crowned with complete and unexampled success, could himself make no progress, new methods, though warranted infallible, were as barren as the old in their operation, and the universal interest in the subject was an incentive to innumerable impostors, who reaped large profits from the publication of worthless speculations and lying recipes. At such a juncture the isolated investigator naturally sought the assistance which is afforded by association ; meetings of men like-minded took place for the discussion of different questions concerning the secret sciences ; doctrines and practices were compared ; men travelled far and wide to exchange opinions with distant workers in the same fields of experimental research, and the spirit of the time seemed ripe for the establishment of a society for the advancement of esoteric science and the study of natural laws. It was at this interesting period that the Rosicrucian Fraternity made public for the first time the fact of its existence, and attracted universal attention by its extraordinary history, and by the nature of its claims.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROPHECY OF PARACELSUS, AND THE UNIVERSAL REFORMATION OF THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD.

PARACELSUS, in the eighth chapter of his "Treatise on Metals," gave utterance to the following prognostication :—*Quod utilius Deus patefieri sinet, quod autem majoris momenti est, vulgo adhuc latet usque ad Eliæ Artistæ adventum, quando is venerit.* "God will permit a discovery of the highest importance to be made, it must be hidden till the advent of the artist Elias." In the first chapter of the same work, he says :—*Hoc item verum est nihil est absconditum quod non sit relegendum ; ideo, post me veniet cujus magnale mundum vivit qui multa revelabit.* "And it is true, there is nothing concealed which shall not be discovered ; for which cause a marvellous being shall come after me, who as yet lives not, and who shall reveal many things." These passages have been claimed as referring to the founder of the Rosicrucian order, and as prophecies of this character are usually the outcome of a general desire rather than of an individual inspiration, they are interesting evidence that then as now many thoughtful people were looking for another saviour of society. At the beginning of the seventeenth century "a great and general reformation," says Buhle, —a reformation far more radical and more directed to the moral improvement of mankind than that accomplished by Luther,— "was believed to be impending over the human race, as a neces-

sary forerunner to the day of judgment." The comet of 1572 was declared by Paracelsus to be "the sign and harbinger of the approaching revolution," and it will be readily believed that his innumerable disciples would welcome a secret society whose vast claims were founded on the philosophy of the master whom they also venerated, as a supreme factor in the approaching reformation. Paracelsus, however, had recorded a still more precise prediction, namely, that "soon after the decease of the Emperor Rudolph, there would be found three treasures that had never been revealed before that time." It is claimed that these treasures were the three works which I proceed to lay before my readers in this and in the two succeeding chapters.

Somewhere about the year 1614 a pamphlet was published anonymously in German, called "*Die Reformation der Ganzen Weiten Welt*," which, according to De Quincey, contained a distinct proposition to inaugurate a secret society, having for its object the general welfare of mankind. This description is simply untrue; the "*Universal Reformation*" is an amusing and satirical account of an abortive attempt made by the god Apollo to derive assistance towards the improvement of the age from the wise men of antiquity and modern times. It is a fairly literal translation of Advertisement 77 of Boccacini's "*Ragguagli di Parnasso*, Centuria Prima;" its internal connection with Rosicrucianism is not clear, but it has been generally reprinted with the society's manifestos, alchemical interpretations have been placed on it, and it is cited by various authors as the first publication of the Fraternity. I have determined to include it in this collection of authoritative documents, and have made use for this purpose of three versions already existing

in English. The literal translation from the Italian, made by Henry Earl of Monmouth,¹ has been taken as the base. I have compared it with the original, and with the later versions which appeared in 1704² and 1706,³ and, where possible, I have abridged it by the elision of unnecessary and embarrassing prolixities.

It is needless to say that the unfortunate Trajano Boccalini had no connection himself with the Rosicrucian Brotherhood. The first "Centuria" appeared in 1612 at Venice, and he met his tragical and violent death in the following year.

A Universal Reformation of the Whole Wide World, by order of the God Apollo, is published by the Seven Sages of Greece and some other Litterati.

The Emperor Justinian, that famed compiler of the Digests and Code, the other day presented to Apollo, for the royal approbation, a new law against self-murder. Apollo was mightily astonished, and fetching a deep sigh, he said, "Is the good government of mankind, Justinian, then fallen into so great disorder that men do voluntarily kill themselves? And whereas I have hitherto given pensions to an infinite number of moral philosophers, only that

¹ "I. Ragguagli di Parnasso: or, Advertisements from Parnassus in Two Centuries, with the Politick Touchstone. Put into English by the Right Honourable Henry Earl of Monmouth." Fol. 1656.

² "Advertisements from Parnassus. Written originally in Italian by the famous Trajano Boccalini. Newly done into English, and adapted to the Present Times." 3 vols. 8vo. 1704. A poor and paraphrastic rendering.

³ "Advices from Parnassus, in Two Centuries, with the Politick Touchstone and an Appendix to it. Written by Trajano Boccalini. Translated by several hands." London. Fol. 1706. The best as regards style, but less literal than the version by the Earl of Monmouth.

by their words and writings they may make men less apprehensive of death, are things now reduced to such calamity that even they will now live no longer, who could not formerly frame themselves to be content to die? And am I amongst all the disorders of my Litterati all this while supinely asleep?" To this Justinian answered, that the law was necessary, and that many cases of violent deaths having happened by many men having desperately made themselves away, worse was to be feared if some opportune remedy were not found out against so great a disorder.

Apollo then began diligently to inform himself, and found that the world was so impaired, that many valued not their lives nor estate, so they might be out of it. The disorders necessitated his Majesty to provide against them with all possible speed, and he absolutely resolved to institute a society of the men most famous in his dominions for wisdom and good life. But in the entrance into so weighty a business he met with insuperable difficulties, for amongst so many philosophers, and the almost infinite number of *vertuosi*, he could not find so much as one who was endowed with half the requisite qualifications to reform his fellow-creatures, his Majesty knowing well that men are better improved by the exemplary life of their reformers than by the best rules that can be given. In this penury of fitting personages, Apollo gave the charge of the Universal Reformation to the Seven Wise Men of Greece, who are of great repute in Parnassus, and are conceived by all men to have found the receipt of washing blackmoors white, which antiquity laboured after in vain. The Grecians were rejoiced at this news for the honour which Apollo had done their nation, but the Latins were grieved, thinking themselves thereby much injured. Wherefore Apollo, well know-

ing that prejudice against reformers hinders the fruit that is to be hoped by reformation, and being naturally given to appease his subjects' imbibtered minds more by giving them satisfaction then by that legislative power with which men are not pleased withal, because they are bound to obey it, that he might satisfie the Romans, joined in commission with the Seven Sages of Greece, Marcus and Annæus Seneca, and in favour to the modern Italian philosophers, he made Jacopo Mazzoni da Cesena Secretary of the Congregation, and honoured him with a vote in their consultations.

On the fourteenth of the last month the seven wise men, with the aforesaid addition, accompanied by a train of the choicest virtuosi of this State, went to the Delfick Palace, the place appropriated for the Reformation. The Litterati were well pleased to see the great number of pedants, who, baskets in hands, went gathering up the sentences and apothegms which fell from those wise men as they went along. The day after the solemn entrance they assembled for the first time, and 'tis said that Thales the Milesian, the first of the Grecian sages, spake thus :—

“ The business, most wise philosophers, about which we are met, is the greatest that can be treated on by human understanding ; and though there be nothing harder then to set bones that have been long broken, wounds that are fistuled, and incurable cancers, yet difficulties which are able to affright others ought not to make us despair, for the impossibility will increase our glory, and I do assure you that I have already found out the true antydote against the poyson of these present corruptions. I am sure we do all believe that nothing hath more corrupted this age then hidden hatreds, feigned love, impiety, and the perfidiousness of double-dealers under the specious cloke of simplicity, love

to religion, and charity. Apply yourselves to these evils, gentlemen; make use of fire and razor, lay corrosive plasters to these wounds which I discover unto you, and mankind, which by reason of their vices, that lead them the highway to death, may be said to be given over by physitians, will soon be made whole, become sincere and plain in their proceedings, true in what they say, and such in their sanctity of life as they were in former times. The true and immediate cure, then, for these present evils consists in necessitating men to live with candour of mind and purity of heart, which cannot be better effected then by making that little window in men's breasts which his Majesty hath often promised to his most faithful virtuosi; for when those who use such art in their proceedings shall be forced to speak and act, having a window whereby one may see into their hearts, they will learn the excellent virtue of being, and not appearing to be; they will conform deeds to words, and their tongues to sincerity of heart; all men will banish lies and falsehood, and the diabolical spirit of hypocrisy will abandon many who are now possess'd with so foul a fiend."

The opinion of Thales was so well approved by the whole Congregation that it was unanimously voted just, and Secretary Mazzoni was commanded to give Apollo a sudden account thereof, who perfectly approved the opinion, and commanded that they should begin that very day to make windows in the breasts of mankind. But at the very instant that the surgeons took their instruments in hand, Homer, Virgil, Plato, Aristotle, Averroes, and other eminent Litterati went to Apollo, and said his Majesty must needs know that the prime means whereby men do govern the world with facility is the reputation of those who command, and they hoped his Majesty would be tender of the

credit which the reverend Philosophical Synod and the honourable Colledg of Vertuosi had universally obtained for sanctity of life and manners. If his Majesty should unexpectedly open every man's breast, the philosophers who formerly were most highly esteemed ran evident hazard of being shamed, and that he might, peradventure, find fowlest faults in those whom he had held to be immaculate. Therefore, before a business of such importance should be taken in hand, they entreated that he would afford his vertuosi a competent time to wash and cleanse their souls. Apollo was greatly pleased by the advice of so famous poets and philosophers, and, by a publick edict, prorogued the day of incision for eight days, during which everyone did so attend the cleansing of their souls from all fallacies, hidden vice, hatred, and counterfeit love, that there was no more honey of roses, succory, cassia, scena, scamony, nor laxative syrups to be found in any grocer's or apothecary's shop in all Parnassus; and the more curious did observe that in the parts where the Platonicks, Peripateticks, and Moral Philosophers did live, there was then such a stink as if all the privies of the country had been emptied, whereas the quarters of Latin and Italian poets smelt only of cabbadg-porridge.

The time allotted for the general purging was already past, when, the day before the operation was to begin, Hippocrates, Galen, Cornelius, Celsus, and other the most skilful Physitians of this State, went to Apollo, and said:—
“Is it possible, Sire, you that are the Lord of the Liberal Sciences, that this Microcosmos must be deformed, which is so nobly and miraculously framed, for the advantage of a few ignorant people? For not only the wiser sort of men, but even those of an indifferent capacity, who have

conversed but four daies with any quack-salver, know how to penetrate even into the inmost bowels."

This memorandum of the physitians wrought so much with Apollo that he changed his former resolution, and by Ausonius Gallus bad the philosophers of the Reformation proceed in delivering their opinions.

Then Solon thus began:—"In my opinion, gentlemen, that which hath put the present age into so great confusion is the cruel hatred and spiteful envy which is seen to reign generally amongst men. All hope then for these present evils is from the infusion of charity, reciprocal affection, and that sanctified love of our neighbour which is God's chiefest commandment to mankind. We ought, therefore, to employ all our skill in removing the occasions of those hatreds which reign in men's hearts, which, if we be able to effect, men will agree like other animals, who, by instinct, love their own species, and will, consequently, drive away all hatred and rancor of mind. I have been long thinking, my friends, what the true spring's head may be of all human hatred, and am still more established in my old opinion that it proceeds from the disparity of means, from the hellish custom of *meum* and *tuum*, which, if it were introduced among the beasts, even they would consume and waste themselves with the same hatred wherewith we so much disquiet ourselves, whereas the equality in which they live, and their having nothing of their own, are the blessings which preserve that peace among them which we have cause to envy. Men are likewise creatures, but rational; this world was created by Almighty God, that mankind might live thereon in peace, not that the avaritious should divide it amongst themselves, and should turn what was common into that *meum* and *tuum* which hath

put us all into such confusion. So it clearly appears, that the depravation of men's souls by avarice, ambition, and tyranny, hath occasioned the present inequality, and if it be true, as we all confess it is, that the world is an inheritance left to mankind by one father and mother, from whom we are all descended like brethren, what justice is it that men should not all have a brother's share? What greater disproportion can be imagined then that this world should be such that some possess more than they can govern, and others have not so much as they could govern? But that which doth infinitely aggravate this disorder is, that usually vertuous men are beggars, whereas wicked and ignorant people are wealthy. From the root of this inequality it then ariseth, that the rich are injurious to the poor, and that the poor envy the rich.

"Now, gentlemen, that I have discovered the malady unto you, it is easie to apply the medicine. To reform the age no better course can be taken then to divide the world anew, allotting an equal part to everyone, and, that we may fall no more upon the like disorders, I advise, that, for the future, all buying and selling be forbidden, to the end that there may be established that parity of goods, the mother of publick peace, which my self and other law-makers have formerly so much laboured to procure."

Solon's opinion suffered a long debate, and though it was not only thought good but necessary by Bias, Periander, and Pittacus, it was gainsaid by all the rest, and Seneca's opinion prevailed, who with substantial reasons convinced the assembly, that if they should come to a new division of the world, one great disorder would necessarily follow; that too much would fall to the share of fools, and too little to gallant men; and that plague, famine, and war were not

God's severest scourges, for the affliction of mankind would be to enrich villains.

Solon's opinion being laid aside, Chilo argued as follows :—“ Which of you, most wise philosophers, doth not know that the immoderate thirst after gold hath now адаies filled the world with all the mischiefs which we see and feel. What wickedness, how execrable soever it be, will men not willingly commit, if thereby they may accumulate riches? Conclude, therefore, unanimously with me, that no better way can be found out, whereby to extirpate all the vices with which our age is opprest, then for ever to banish out of the world the two infamous mettals, gold and silver, for so the occasion of our present disorders being removed, the evils will necessarily cease.”

Though Chilo's opinion had a very specious appearance, it would not bear the test, for it was said, that men took so much pains to get gold and silver because they are the measure and counterpoise of all things, and that it was requisite for man to have some mettals, or other thing of price, by which he might purchase what was fitting for him, that if there were no such thing as gold or silver, he would make use of something instead of them, which, rising in value, would be equally coveted, as was plainly seen in the Indies, where cockle-shells were made use of instead of money, and more vallued than either gold or silver. Cleobulus, particularly, being very hot in refuting this opinion, said, with much perturbation of mind :—“ My Masters, banish iron out of the world, for that is the metall which hath put us into the present condition. Gold and silver serve the purpose ordained by God, whereas iron, which Nature produced for the making of plow-shears, spades, and mattocks, is by the mallice and mischief of

men, forged into swords, daggers, and other deadly instruments."

Though Cleobolus his opinion was judged to be very true, yet it was concluded by the whole Assembly, that, it being impossible to expel iron but by grasping iron and putting on corslets, it was imprudent to multiply mischiefs, and to cure one wound with another. 'Twas, therefore, generally resolved, that the ore of gold and silver should be still kept, but that the refiners should be directed for the future to cleanse them well, and not to take them out of the fire till they had removed from both mettals that vein of turpentine which is the reason why gold and silver stick so close to the fingers even of good and honest men.

Then Pittachus, with extraordinary gravity, thus began:—"The world, most learned philosophers, is fallen into that deplorable condition which we labour to amend because men in these daies have given over travailing by the beaten roadway of vertue, and take the bye-waies of vice, by which, in this corrupted age, they obtain the rewards only due to vertue. Things are brought to such a woful state, that none can get entrance into the palace of dignity, honor, or reward by the gate of merit, but like thieves they climb the windows with ladders of tergeversation, and some, by the force of gifts and favours, have even opened the roof to get thereby into the house of honour. If you would reform this corrupted age, my opinion is, that you should force men to walk by the way of vertue, and make severe laws, that whosoever will take the laborious journey which leads to supreme dignities must travail with the waggon of desert, and with the sure guide of vertue. Consequently, you should order the stopping up of all cross-paths and crooked lanes, discovered by ambitious men and

modern hypocrites, who, multiplying faster then locusts in Africa, have filled the world with contagion. What greater affront can be put upon vertue then to see one of these rascals mounted on the throne of preferment when no man can guess what course he took to reach it! Which makes many think they have got it by the magick of hypocrisy, whereby these magicians do inchant the minds even of wise princes."

Pittacus his opinion was not only praised, but greatly admired by the whole Assembly, and certainly would have been approved as the most excellent, had not Periander changed their minds by the following discourse:—"Gentlemen, the disorder mentioned by Pittacus is very true; but the thing we should chiefly consider is why princes, who are so quick-sighted and interested in their own State-affairs, do not bestow, in these our daies, their great places (as they were wont to do of old) on able and deserving men, by whose service they may receive advantage and reputation, but instead, make use of new fellows raised out of the mire, and without either worth or honor? The opinion of those who say that it is fatal for princes to love carrion is so false, that for the least interest of State they neglect their brethren, and wax cruel even against their own children, so far are they from ruining themselves by blind fondness for their servants. Princes do not act by chance, nor suffer themselves to be guided in their proceedings by their passions; whatsoever they do is out of interest, and those things which to private men appear errors and negligence are accurate politick precepts. All that have written of State-affairs freely confess that the best way to govern kingdoms well is to confer places of highest dignity upon men of great merit and known worth and valour.

This is a truth very well known to princes; and though it be clearly seen that they do not observe it, he is a fool that believes they do not out of carelessness. I, who have long studied a point of so great weight, am perswaded that ignorant and raw men, and men of no merit, are preferred before learned and deserving persons, not out of any fault in the prince, but (I blush to say it) through default of the *vertuosi*. I acknowledge that princes stand in need of learned officers and men of experienced valor, but they likewise need faithful servants. If deserving men and men of valor were loyal in proportion to their capacity, we should not complain of the present disorders in seeing undeserving dwarfs become great giants in four daies' space, ignorance seated in the chair of virtue, and folly in valor's tribunal. 'Tis common to all men to overrate their own worth, but the *vertuosi* do presume so much upon their own good parts that they rather pretend to add to the prince's reputation by accepting preferments than to receive credit themselves by accepting his munificence. I have known many so foolishly enamoured of their own works that they have thought it a greater happiness for a prince to have an occasion of honouring them than good luck for the other to meet with so liberal a prince. Such men, acknowledging all favours conferred upon them as debts paid to their deserts, prove so ungrateful to their benefactors in their necessity that they are abhorred as perfidious, and are causes of this grievance, that princes seek fidelity instead of more shining accomplishments, that they may be secure of gratitude when they stand in need of it."

Periander having finished his discourse, Bias spake thus:—"Most wise philosophers, all of you sufficiently know that the reason of the world's depravity is only be-

cause mankind hath so shamefully abandoned those holy laws which God gave them to observe when he bestowed the whole world upon them for a habitation ; nor did he place the French in France, the Spaniards in Spain, the Dutch in Germany, and bound up the fowl fiend in hell for any other reason but the advantage of that general peace which he desired might be observed throughout the whole world. But avarice and ambition (spurs which have alwaies egged on men to greatest wickedness), causing nations to pass into other men's countries, have caused these evils which we endeavour to amend. If it be true, as we all confess it is, that God hath done nothing in vain, wherefore, think you, hath His Divine Majesty placed the inaccessible Pyrenean mountains between the Spaniards and Italians, the rocky Alpes between the Italians and Germans, the dreadful English Channel between the French and English, the Mediterranean Sea between Africa and Europe? Why hath he made the infinite spacious rivers of Euphrates, Indus, Ganges, and the rest, save only that people might be content to live in their own countries by reason of the difficulties of fords and passages? And the Divine Wisdom, knowing that the harmony of universal peace would be out of tune, and that the world would be filled with incurable diseases, if men should exceed their allotted bounds, added the multitude and variety of languages to all the fore-mentioned impediments, without which all men would speak the same tongue, as all creatures of the same species sing, bark, or bray after one and the same manner. 'Tis then man's boldness in boaring through mountains, passing over the broadest and most rapid rivers, and even manifestly and rashly hazard-ing himself and all his substance by crossing the largest

seas in a little wooden vessel, which caused the ancient Romans, not to mention any other nations, to ruine other men's affairs and discompose their own, not being satisfied with their dominion over the whole of Italy. The true remedy, then, for so great disorder is, first to force every nation to return to their own countreys, and then, to prevent the like confusion in future, I am of opinion that all bridges built for the more commodious passing of rivers should be absolutely broken down, that the ways over the mountains should be quite destroyed, and the mountains made more inaccessible by man's industry then originally by nature ; and I would have all navigation forbidden upon severest penalty, not allowing so much as the least boats to pass over rivers."

Bias his opinion was regarded with unusual attention, but after being well examined by the best wits of the Assembly, it was found not to be good, for all those philosophers knew that the greatest enmities between nation and nation are not national, but occasioned by cunning princes, who are great masters in the proverb, *Divide et impera*, and that that perfection of manners being found in all nations joyned together which was not to be had in any particular one, travel is necessary to acquire the complete wisdom which adorned the Great Ulysses. Now, this is a benefit entirely owing to navigation, which is very necessary to mankind, were it onely for that God, having created this world of an almost incomprehensible greatness, having filled it with pretious things, and endowed every province with somewhat of particular navigation, 'tis by that wonderful art reduced to so small an extent that the aromatics of Molucca, though above fifteen thousand miles from Italy, seem to the Italians to grow in their own gardens.

Thus the opinion of Bias was laid aside, when Cleobulus, rising up, and with a low bow, seeming to crave leave to speak, said thus :—" I clearly perceive, most wise gentlemen, that the reformation of the present age, a business of itself very easie, becomes by the diversity and extravagancy of our opinions rather impossible then difficult. And to speak with the freedom which becomes this place and the weight of the business which we have in hand, it grieves my heart to find, even amongst us, that common defect of ambitious and slight wits, who, getting up into publike pulpits, labor more to display their ingenuity by their new and curious conceits, then to profit their auditors by useful precepts and sound doctrines. To raise man out of the foul mire whereinto he has fallen, to what purpose is that dangerous operation of making little windows in their breasts, which Thales advised ? And why should we undertake the laborious business of dividing the world into equal partitions according to Solon's proposition ? Or the course mentioned by Chilo, of banishing gold and silver out of the world ? Or that of Pittacus, of forcing men to walk in the way of merit and vertue ? Or, lastly, that of Bias, that mountains should be raised higher and made more difficult then Nature hath made them, and that the miracle of navigation should be extirpated, the greatest proof of human ingenuity that was ever given ? What are these but chimæras and sophistical fancies ? The chief consideration which reformers ought to have is, that the remedy proposed be practicable, that it may work its effect soon and secretly, and that it may be chearfully received by those who are to be reformed, for, otherwise, we shall rather deform the world then improve it. There is great reason for this assertion, for that Physitian deserves to be blamed, who should

ordain a medecine for his impatient which is impossible to be used, and which would afflict him more then his disease. Therefore is it the requisite duty of reformers to provide a sure remedy before they take notice of the wound ; it is not onely foolishness but impiety to defame men by publishing their vices, and to shew the world that their maladies are grown to such a height that they are past cure. Therefore the Great Tacitus, who always speaks to the purpose if he be rightly understood, doth in this particular advise men. *Omittere potius prævalida et adulta vitia, quam hoc assequi, ut palam fieret, quibus flagitiis impares essemus.*¹ Those who would fell an old oak are ill-advised if they begin with lopping the top boughs ; our true method, gentlemen, is to lay the axe to the root, as I do now, in affirming that the reformation of the present age consists wholly in these few words—REWARD THE GOOD AND PUNISH THE BAD.”

Here Cleobulus held his peace, whose opinion Thales Milesius did with such violence oppose as showed how dangerous a thing it is to offend, though by speaking the truth, those who have the repute to be good and wise, for he with a fiery countenance broke forth into these words :—“ Myself, and these gentlemen, most wise Cleobulus, whose opinions you have been pleased to reject as sophistical and meer chimeras, did expect from your rare wisdom that you had brought some new and miraculous Bezoar from the Indies for cure of these present evils, whereas you have propounded that for the easiest remedy which is the hardest and most impossible that could ever be fancied by the prime pretenders to high mysteries, Caius Plinius and Albertus Magnus. There is not any of us, my Cleobulus, that did not know, before you were pleased to put us in

¹ Tacitus, Lib. 3, Ann.

mind of it, that the reformation of the world depends wholly upon rewarding such as are good and punishing the wicked. But give me leave to ask you, who are those that in this our age are perfectly good, and who exactly ill? I would also know whether your eye can discern that which could never yet be found out by any man living, how to know true goodness from that which is counterfeit. Do not you know that modern hypocrites are arrived at that height of cunning that, in this our unhappy age, those are accounted to be cunningest in their wickedness who seem most exactly good, and that really perfect men, who live in sincerity and singleness of soul, with an undisguised and unartificial goodness, are thought to be scandalous and silly? Every one by natural instinct loves those that are good and hates those that are wicked, but princes do it both out of instinct and interest, and when hypocrites or other cunning cheaters are listened unto by great men, while good men are suppressed and undervalued, it is not by the princes' own election but through the abuse of others. True vertue is known onely and rewarded by God, by whom also vices are discovered and punished. He onely penetrates into the depths of men's hearts, and we, by means of the window I proposed, might also have looked therein had not the enemy of mankind sown tares in the field where I sowed the grain of good advice. But new laws, how good and wholesome soever, have alwaies been and ever will be withstood by those vitious people who are thereby punished."

The reasoning of Thales gave mighty satisfaction to the Assembly, and all of them turned their eyes upon Periander, who, thinking himself thereby desired to speak his opinion, began thus:—"The variety of opinions which I have heard confirms me in my former tenet, that four parts

of five who are sick perish because the physitians know not their disease ; such errors are indeed excusable, because men are easily deceived in matters of mere conjecture, but that we, who are judged by Apollo to be the salt of the earth, should not know the evil under which the present age labours, redounds much to our shame, since the malady which we ought to cure lies not hidden in the veins, but is so manifestly known to all men that it self cries aloud for help. And yet, by all the reasons I have heard alledged, methinks you go about to mend the arm when it is the heart that is fistula'd. Gentlemen, since it is Apollo's pleasure that we should do so, since our reputation stands upon it, and charity to our so afflicted age requires it at our hands, let us, I beseech you, take from our faces the mask of respect, which hath been hitherto worn by us all, and let us speak freely. The fatal error then which has so long confirmed mankind in their unhappiness is this, that while the vices of the great have brought the world into confusion, a reformation of private men's faults has been thought sufficient to retrieve it. But the falshood, avarice, pride and hypocrisie of private men are not the vices (though I confess them to be banious evils, which have so much depraved our age, for fitting punishments being by the law provided for every fault and foul action, man is so obedient to the laws and so apprehensive of justice that a few ministers thereof make millions of men tremble, and men live in such peace that the rich cannot, without much danger to themselves, oppress the poor, and every one may walk safely both by day and night with gold in their hand, not onely in the streets but even in the highways. But the world's most dangerous infirmities are discovered when publique peace is disturbed, and we must all of us confess that the

ambition, avarice, and diabolical engagement which the swords of some powerful princes have usurped over the states of those less powerful is the great scandal of the present times. 'Tis this, gentlemen, which hath filled the world with hatred and suspicion, and hath defiled it with so much blood, that men, who were created by God with humane hearts and civil inclinations, are become ravenous wilde beasts, tearing one another in pieces with all sorts of inhumanity. The ambition of these men hath changed publike peace into most cruel war, vertue into vice, the love which we ought to bear our neighbours into such intestine hatred, that, though Lyons appear Lyons to their own species, yet the Scotch to the English, the Italians to the Germans, the French to the Spaniards, and every nation to another, appear not men and brethren but creatures of another kind, so that justice being oppressed by the inexplicable ambition of potent men, our race, which was born, brought up, and did live long under the government of wholesome laws, waxing now cruel to itself, lives with the instinct of beasts, ready to oppress the weaker. Theft which is undoubtedly base, is so persecuted by the laws that the stealing of an egg is a capital fault, yet powerful men are so blinded with ambition as to rob another man perfidiously of his whole state, which is not thought to be an execrable mischief but an noble occupation, and onely fit for kings. Tacitus, the master of policy, that he may win the good will of princes, is not ashamed to say, *In summa Fortuna id æquis quod validius, et sua retinere privata domus, de alienis certare, regiam laudem esse.*¹ If it be true, as all politicians agree, that people are the prince's apes, how can those who obey live vertuously quiet when their commanders do so abound

¹ Tacitus, Lib. V. Ann.

in vice. To bereave a powerful prince of a kingdome is a weighty business which is not to be done by one man alone. To effect so foul an intent they muster a multitude of men, who, that they may not fear the shame of stealing their neighbours' goods, of murdering men, and of firing cities, change the name of base thief into that of gallant souldier and valliant commander. And that which aggravates this evil is that even good princes are forced to run upon the same rocks to defend their own estates from the ravenousness of these harpyes, and to regain what they have lost, and to revenge themselves of those that have injured them, have in reprizal got possession of their dominions, till, lured on by gain, they betake themselves to the same shameful trade. Thus the method of plundering others of their kingdomes is become a reputable art, and humane wit, made to admire and contemplate the miracles of Heaven and the wonders of the earth, is wholly turned to invent stratagems and to plot treasons, while the hands, which were made to cultivate the earth that feeds us, are employed in the exercise of arms that we may kill one another. This is the wound which hath brought our age to its last gasp, and the true way to remedy it is for princes who use such dealings to amend themselves, and to be content with their own fortunes, for, certainly, it appears very strange that there should be any king who cannot satisfie his ambition with the absolute command over twenty millions of men. Princes, as you all know, were ordained by God on earth for the good of mankind ; therefore, it would do well not onely to bridle their ambitious lust after the possessions of others, but I think it necessary that the peculiar engagement which some men pretend their swords have over all estates, be cut up by the root, and I advise above all things that the

greatness of principalities be limited, it being impossible that overgrown kingdoms should be governed with that exact care and justice which is requisite to the people's good, and which princes are bound to observe. There never was a vast monarchy which was not in a short time lost by the negligence of its governors."

Here Periander ended, whom Solon thus opposed :—"The true cause, Periander, of our present mischiefs which you have mentioned with such liberty of speech was not omitted by us out of ignorance, but out of prudence. The disorders you speak of began when the world was first peopled, and you know that the most skilful physitian cannot restore sight to one born blind. I mention this because it is much the same thing to cure an infirm eye as to reform antiquated errors. For as the skilful physitian betakes himself to his cauters the first day he sees the distempered eye water, but is forced to leave that patient in deserved blindness who neglected to seek a cure till his sight was quite lost, so reformers should oppose abuses with severe remedies the very first hour that they commence, for when vice and corruption have got deep rooting, it is wiselier done to tolerate the evil, then to go about to remedy it out of time, with danger to occasion worse inconveniences, it being more dangerous to cut an old wen then it is misbecoming to let it stand. Moreover, we are here to call to mind the disorders of private men, and to use modesty in so doing, but to be silent in what concerns princes, for they having no superiours in this world it belongs onely to God to reform them, He having given them the prerogative to command, us the glory to obey. Subjects, therefore, should correct the faults of their rulers onely by their own godly living, for the hearts of princes being in the hands

of the Almighty, when people deserve ill from His Divine Majestie he raiseth up Pharoahs against them, and, on the contrary, makes princes tender-hearted, when people by their fidelity and obedience deserve God's assistance."

What Solon said was much commended by all the hearers, and then Cato began thus:—"Your opinions, most wise Grecians, are much to be admired, and have abundantly justified the profound esteem which all the Litterati have of you; the vices, corruptions, and ulcerated wounds under which the age languishes could not be better discovered and pointed out. Nor are your opinions, which are full of humane knowledge, gain-said here for that they are not excellent, but for that the malady is so habituated in the veins, and is even so grounded in the bones, that the constitution of mankind is worn out, and their vital vertue yields to the strength of the distemper; in short, the patient spits nothing but blood and putrefaction, and the hair falls from his head. The physitian, gentlemen, hath a hard part to play when the sick man's maladies are many, and one so far differing from another that cooling medicines, and such as are good for a hot liver, are nought for the stomach, and weaken it too much. Truly this is just our case, for the maladies which molest our age equal the stars of heaven, and are more various than the flowers of the field. I, therefore, think this cure desperate, and that the patient is totally incapable of humane help. We must have recourse to prayers and to other divine helps, which in like case are usually implored from God; this is the true north-star, which, in the greatest difficulties, leads men into the harbour of perfection, for *Pauci prudentia, honesta ab deterioribus, utilia ab noxiis discernunt; plures aliorum eventis docentur*.¹ If we approve this consideration, we shall

¹ Tac., Lib. iv., Ann.

find that when the world was formerly sunk into the same disorders, it was God's care that did help it by sending a universal deluge to raze mankind, full of abominable and incorrigible vice, from off the world. And, gentlemen, when a man sees the walls of his house all gaping and ruinous, and its foundations so weakened that, in all appearance, it is ready to fall, certainly it is more wisely done to pull down the house and build it anew, then to lose money and time in piecing and patching it. Therefore, since man's life is so foully depraved with vice that it is past all human power to restore it to its former health, I do with all my heart beseech the Divine Majestie, and counsel you to do the like, that He will again open the cataracts of Heaven, and pour down upon the earth another deluge, with this restriction, that a new Ark may be made, wherein all boys not above twelve years of age may be saved, and that all the female sex, of whatsoever age, be so wholly consumed, that nothing but their unhappy memory may remain. And I beseech the same Divine Majestie that as He hath granted the singular benefit to bees, fishes, beetles,¹ and other animals, to procreate without the female sex, so He will think men worthy of the like favour. I have learnt for certain that as long as there shall be any women in the world men will be wicked."

It is not to be believed how much Cato's discourse displeased the whole Assembly, who did all so abhor the harsh conceit of a deluge, that, casting themselves upon the ground, with their hands held up to heaven, they humbly beseeched Almighty God that He would preserve the excellent female sex, that He would keep mankind from any more deluges, or that He would send them on the

¹ See Additional Note, No. 3.

earth onely to extirpate those discomposed and wilde wits, those untunable and bloodthirsty souls, those heterodox and phantastick brains, who, being of a depraved judgment, are nothing but mad men, whose ambition was boundless, and pride without end, and that when mankind should, through their demerits, become unworthy of any mercy from the Almighty, He would be pleased to punish them with the scourges of plague, sword, and famine, rather than to deliver mankind unto the good will and pleasure of those insolent and wicked rulers, who, being composed of nothing but blind zeal and diabolical folly, would pull the world in pieces if they could compass the bestial caprices they hourly hatch in their heads.

Cato's opinion had this unlucky end, when Seneca thus began :—" Rough dealing is not so greatly requisite in reformation as would seem by many of your discourses, especially when disorders have grown to so great a height ; on the contrary, they ought, like wounds which are subject to convulsions, to be drest with a light hand. It is a scandal to the physitian that the patient should die with his prescriptions in his body, since all men will conclude that the medecine hath done him more harm then his malady. It is a rash advice to go from one extreme to another, passing by the due medium ; man's nature is not capable of violent mutations, and if it be true that the world hath been falling many thousand years into the present infirmities, he is a very fool who thinks to restore it to health in a few days. Moreover, in reformation the conditions of those who do reform, and the qualities of those that are to be reformed, ought to be exactly considered. We that are the reformers are philosophers and men of learning, and if those to be reformed be onely

stationers, printers, such as sell paper, pens, and ink, or other such things appertaining to learning, we may very well correct their errors, but if we offer to rectify the faults of other trades, we shall commit worse errors, and become more ridiculous then the shoemaker who would judge of colours, and durst censure Apelles his pictures. This, I must say, is a defect frequent in us Litterati, who, for four *cujus* that we have in our heads, pretend to know all things, and are not aware that when we first swerve from our books we run riot, and say a thousand things from the purpose. I say this, gentlemen, because nothing more obviates reformations then to walk therein in the dark, which happens when reformers are not well acquainted with the vices of those with whom they have to deal. The reason is apparent, for nothing makes men more obstinate in their errors then when they find their reformers ill-informed of their defects. Now, which of us is acquainted with the falsehood of notaries, the prevarications of advocates, the simony of judges, the tricks of attorneys, the cheats of apothecaries, the filching of tailors, the roguery of butchers, and the cheating tricks of a thousand other artificers? And yet all these excesses must be by us corrected, which are so far from our profession that we shall appear like so many blind fellows fumbling to stop a leaky cask which spills the wine on every side. This, gentlemen, is enough to convince you that reformation is only likely to proceed well when mariners discourse of navigation, souldiers of war, shepherds of sheep, and herdsmen of bullocks. It is manifest presumption in us to pretend to know all things, and meer malice to believe that in every occupation there are not three or four honest men. My opinion, therefore, is, that we ought to send for a few of each profession of

known probity and worth, and that every one should correct his own trade ; by this means, we shall publish to the world a reformation worthy of ourselves and of the present exigencies."

Pittachus and Chilo extolled this speech to the skies, and seeing the other philosophers of a contrary sentiment, protested before God and the world that they believed it was impossible to find out a better means for the reformation of mankind, yet did the rest of their companions abhor it more than Cato's proposition, and with great indignation told Seneca they much wondered that he, by taking more reformers into their number, should so far dishonour Apollo, who had thought them not only sufficient but excellently fit for that business. It was not wisely advised to begin the general reformation by publishing their own weakness, for all resolutions which detract from the credit of the publishers want that reputation which is the very soul of business. It was strange a man who was the very prime sage of Latin writers should be so lavish of authority, which should be guarded more jealously than women's honor, since the wisest men did all agree that twenty pound of blood taken from the life-vain was well employed to gain but one ounce of jurisdiction.

The whole Assembly were mightily afflicted when, by the reputation of Seneca's opinion, they found small hopes of effecting the reformation, for they relied little on Mazzoni, who was but a novice ; which though Mazzoni did by many signs perceive, yet, no whit discouraged, he spoke thus :—" It was not for any merit of mine, most wise philosophers, that I was admitted by Apollo into this reverend congregation, but out of his Majesty's special favour ; and I very well know that it better becomes me to use my ears than

my tongue, and certainly I should not dare to open my mouth upon any other occasion ; but reformation being the business in hand, and I lately coming where nothing is spoken of but reformation and reformers, I desire that every one may hold their peace, and that I alone may be heard to speak in a business which I am so verst in that I may boast myself to be the onely Euclid of this mathematick. Give me leave, I beseech you, to say that you, in relating your opinions, seem to me to be like those indiscrete physitians who lose time in consulting and disputing without having seen the sick party, or heard from his own mouth the account of his disease. Our business, gentlemen, is to cure the present age of the foul infirmities under which she labours ; we have all laboured to find out the reasons of the maladies and its proper remedys, but none of us bath been so wise as to visit the sick party. I therefore advise that we send for the present Age to come hither and be examined, that we interrogate it of its sickness, and that we see the ill-affected parts naked, for this will make the cure easie, which you now think desperate."

The whole Assembly was so pleased at Mazzoni's motion, that the reformers immediately commanded the Age to be sent for, who was presently brought in a chair to the Delphick Palace by the four Seasons of the year. He was a man full of years, but of so great and strong a complexion that he seemed likely to live yet many ages, onely he was short breathed, and his voyce was very weak, at which the philosophers, much wondering, asked him what was the reason that he, whose ruddy face was a sign of much natural heat and vigor, and of a good stomach, was nevertheless so feeble ? And they told him that a hundred years before his face was so yellow that he seemed to have the

jaundice, yet he spoke freely, and seemed to be stronger then he was now, and since they had sent for him to cure his infirmity, he should speak freely of his griefs.

The Age answered thus:—"Soon after I was born, gentlemen, I fell into these maladies under which I now labour. My face is fresh and ruddy because people have petered it and coloured it with lakes; my sickness resembles the ebbing and flowing of the sea, which alwaies contains the same water, though it rises and falls, with this variation notwithstanding, that when my looks are outwardly good, my malady is more grievous inwardly (as at this present), but when my face looks ill, I am best within. As for the infirmities which torment me, do but take off this gay jacket, wherewith some good people have covered a rotten carcass, and view me naked as I was made by Nature."

At these words the philosophers stript him in a trice, and found that this miserable wretch was covered all over four inches thick with a scurf of appearances. They caused ten razors to be forthwith brought unto them, and fell to shaving it off with great diligence, but they found it so far eaten into his very bones that in all the huge colossus there was not one inch of good live flesh, at which, being struck with horror and despair, they put on the patient's cloaths again, and dismissed him. Then, convinced that the disease was incurable, they shut themselves up together, and abandoning the case of publike affairs, they resolved to provide for the safety of their own reputations. Mazzoni writ what the rest of the reformers dictated, a Manifesto, wherein they witnessed to the world the great care Apollo ever had of the virtuous lives of his Litterati, and of the welfare of all mankind, also what pains the Reformers had

taken in compiling the General Reformation. Then, coming to particulars, they fixt the prices of sprats, cabbiges, and pumpkins. The Assembly had already under-written the Reformation when Thales put them in mind that certain higlers, who sold pease and black-cherryes, vinted such small measures that it was a shame not to take order therein. The Assembly thankt Thales for his advertisement, and added to their reformation that the measures should be made greater. Then the palace gates were thrown open, and the General Reformation was read, in the place appointed for such purposes, to the people assembled in great numbers in the market-place, and was so generally applauded by every one that all Parnassus rang with shouts of joy, for the rabble are satisfied with trifles, while men of judgment know that *vitia erunt donec homines*¹—as long as there be men there will be vices—that men live on earth not indeed well, but as little ill as they may, and that the height of human wisdom lies in the discretion to be content with leaving the world as they found it.

¹ Tac., Lib. iv., Hist.

CHAPTER III.

THE FAMA FRATERNITATIS OF THE MERITORIOUS ORDER OF THE ROSY CROSS, ADDRESSED TO THE LEARNED IN GENERAL, AND THE GOVERNORS OF EUROPE.

THE original edition of the "Universal Reformation" contained the manifesto bearing the above title, but which the notary Haselmeyer declares to have existed in manuscript as early as the year 1610, as would also appear from a passage in the Cassel edition of 1614, the earliest which I have been able to trace. It was reprinted with the "Confessio Fraternitatis" and the "Allgemeine Reformation der Ganzen Welt" at Franckfurt-on-the-Mayne in 1615. A Dutch translation was also published in this year, and by 1617 there had been four Franckfurt editions, the last omitting the "Universal Reformation," which, though it received an elaborate alchemical elucidation by Brotoffer,¹ seems gradually to have dropped out of notice. "Other editions," says Buhle, "followed in the years immediately succeeding, but these it is unnecessary to notice. In the title-page of the third Franckfurt edition stands—*First printed at Cassel in the year 1616*. But the four first words apply to the original edition, the four last to this."²

¹ "Elucidarius Major, oder Ekleuchterunge über die Reformatio der ganzen Weiten Welt . . . Durch Radtichs Brotofferr." 1617.

² De Quincey, "Rosicrucians and Freemasons."

*Fama Fraternitatis ; or, a Discovery of the Fraternity of the
most Laudable Order of the Rosy Cross.*

Seeing the only wise and merciful God in these latter days hath poured out so richly His mercy and goodness to mankind, whereby we do attain more and more to the perfect knowledge of His Son Jesus Christ and of Nature, that justly we may boast of the happy time wherein there is not only discovered unto us the half part of the world, which was heretofore unknown and hidden, but He hath also made manifest unto us many wonderful and never-heretofore seen works and creatures of Nature, and, moreover, hath raised men, indued with great wisdom, which might partly renew and reduce all arts (in this our spotted and imperfect age) to perfection, so that finally man might thereby understand his own nobleness and worth, and why he is called *Micro-cosmus*, and how far his knowledge extendeth in Nature.

Although the rude world herewith will be but little pleased, but rather smile and scoff thereat ; also the pride and covetousness of the learned is so great, it will not suffer them to agree together ; but were they united, they might, out of all those things which in this our age God doth so richly bestow on us, collect *Librum Naturæ*, or, a Perfect Method of all Arts. But such is their opposition that they still keep, and are loth to leave, the old course, esteeming Porphyry, Aristotle, and Galen, yea, and that which hath but a meer show of learning, more than the clear and manifested Light and Truth. Those, if they were now living, with much joy would leave their erroneous doctrines ; but here is too great weakness for such a great work. And although in Theologie, Physic, and the Mathematic, the truth doth oppose it itself, nevertheless, the old Enemy, by

his subtilty and craft, doth shew himself in hindering every good purpose by his instruments and contentious wavering people.

To such an intention of a general reformation, the most godly and highly-illuminated Father, our Brother, C. R. C., a German, the chief and original of our Fraternity, hath much and long time laboured, who, by reason of his poverty (although descended of noble parents), in the fifth year of his age was placed in a cloyster, where he had learned indifferently the Greek and Latin tongues, and (upon his earnest desire and request), being yet in his growing years, was associated to a Brother, P. A. L., who had determined to go to the Holy Land. Although this Brother¹ dyed in Ciprus, and so never came to Jerusalem, yet our Brother C. R. C. did not return, but shipped himself over, and went to Damasco, minding from thence to go to Jerusalem. But by reason of the feebleness of his body he remained still there, and by his skill in physie he obtained much favour with the Turks, and in the meantime he became acquainted with the Wise Men of Damcar in Arabia, and beheld what great wonders they wrought, and how Nature was discovered unto them.

Hereby was that high and noble spirit of Brother C. R. C. so stired up, that Jerusalem was not so much now in his mind as Damasco;¹ also he could not bridle his desires any longer, but made a bargain with the Arabians that they should carry him for a certain sum of money to Damcar.

¹ Damascus and the unknown city denominated Damcar are continually confused in the German editions. Brother C. R. C. evidently did not project a journey to Damascus, which he had already reached; nevertheless this is the name appearing in this place, and I have decided on retaining it for reasons which will subsequently be made evident.

He was but of the age of sixteen years when he came thither, yet of a strong Dutch constitution. There the Wise Men received him not as a stranger (as he himself witnesseth), but as one whom they had long expected; they called him by his name, and shewed him other secrets out of his cloyster, whereat he could not but mightily wonder.

He learned there better the Arabian tongue, so that the year following he translated the book *M* into good Latin, which he afterwards brought with him. This is the place where he did learn his Physick and his Mathematics, whereof the world hath much cause to rejoice, if there were more love and less envy.

After three years he returned again with good consent, shipped himself over *Sinus Arabicus* into Egypt, where he remained not long, but only took better notice there of the plants and creatures. He sailed over the whole Mediterranean Sea for to come unto Fez, where the Arabians had directed him.

It is a great shame unto us that wise men, so far remote the one from the other, should not only be of one opinion, hating all contentious writings, but also be so willing and ready, under the seal of secrecy, to impart their secrets to others. Every year the Arabians and Africans do send one to another, inquiring one of another out of their arts, if happily they had found out some better things, or if experience had weakened their reasons. Yearly there came something to light whereby the Mathematics, Physic, and Magic (for in those are they of Fez most skilful) were amended. There is now-a-days no want of learned men in Germany, Magicians, Cabalists, Physicians, and Philosophers, were there but more love and

kindness among them, or that the most part of them would not keep their secrets close only to themselves.

At Fez he did get acquaintance with those which are commonly called the Elementary inhabitants, who revealed unto him many of their secrets, as we Germans likewise might gather together many things if there were the like unity and desire of searching out secrets amongst us.

Of these of Fez he often did confess, that their Magia was not altogether pure, and also that their Cabala was defiled with their Religion; but, notwithstanding, he knew how to make good use of the same, and found still more better grounds for his faith, altogether agreeable with the harmony of the whole world, and wonderfully impressed in all periods of time. Thence proceedeth that fair Concord, that as in every several kernel is contained a whole good tree or fruit, so likewise is included in the little body of man, the whole great world, whose religion, policy, health, members, nature, language, words, and works, are agreeing, sympathizing, and in equal tune and melody with God, Heaven, and Earth; and that which is disagreeing with them is error, falsehood, and of the devil, who alone is the first, middle, and last cause of strife, blindness, and darkness in the world. Also, might one examine all and several persons upon the earth, he should find that which is good and right is always agreeing with itself, but all the rest is spotted with a thousand erroneous conceits.

After two years Brother R. C. departed the city Fez, and sailed with many costly things into Spain, hoping well, as he himself had so well and profitably spent his time in his travel, that the learned in Europe would highly rejoyce with him, and begin to rule and order all their

studies according to those sure and sound foundations. He therefore conferred with the learned in Spain, shewing unto them the errors of our arts, and how they might be corrected, and from whence they should gather the true *Inditia* of the times to come, and wherein they ought to agree with those things that are past; also how the faults of the Church and the whole *Philosophia Moralis* were to be amended. He shewed them new growths, new fruits, and beasts, which did concord with old philosophy, and prescribed them new Axiomata, whereby all things might fully be restored. But it was to them a laughing matter, and being a new thing unto them, they feared that their great name would be lessened if they should now again begin to learn, and acknowledge their many years' errors, to which they were accustomed, and wherewith they had gained them enough. Who so loveth unquietness, let him be reformed (they said). The same song was also sung to him by other nations, the which moved him the more because it happened to him contrary to his expectation, being then ready bountifully to impart all his arts and secreta to the learned, if they would have but undertaken to write the true and infallible Axiomata, out of all faculties, sciences, and arts, and whole nature, as that which he knew would direct them, like a globe or circle, to the onely middle point and *centrum*, and (as it is usual among the Arabians) it should onely serve to the wise and learned for a rule, that also there might be a society in Europe which might have gold, silver, and precious stones, sufficient for to bestow them on kings for their necessary uses and lawful purposes, with which [society] such as be governors might be brought up for to learn all that which God hath suffered man to know, and thereby

to be enabled in all times of need to give their counsel unto those that seek it, like the Heathen Oracles.

Verily we must confess that the world in those days was already big with those great commotions, labouring to be delivered of them, and did bring forth painful, worthy men, who brake with all force through darkness and barbarism, and left us who succeeded to follow them. Assuredly they have been the uppermost point in *Trygono igneo*, whose flame now should be more and more brighter, and shall undoubtedly give to the world the last light.

Such a one likewise hath Theophrastus been in vocation and callings, although he was none of our Fraternity, yet, nevertheless hath he diligently read over the Book M, whereby his sharp ingenium was exalted; but this man was also hindered in his course by the multitude of the learned and wise-seeming men, that he was never able peaceably to confer with others of the knowledge and understanding he had of Nature. And therefore in his writings he rather mocked these busie bodies, and doth not shew them altogether what he was; yet, nevertheless, there is found with him well grounded the afore-named Harmonia, which without doubt he had imparted to the learned, if he had not found them rather worthy of subtil vexation then to be instructed in greater arts and sciences. He thus with a free and careless life lost his time, and left unto the world their foolish pleasures.

But that we do not forget our loving Father, Brother C. R., he after many painful travels, and his fruitless true instructions, returned again into Germany, the which he heartily loved, by reason of the alterations which were shortly to come, and of the strange and dangerous contentions. There, although he could have bragged with his art,

but specially of the transmutations of metals, yet did he esteem more Heaven, and men, the citizens thereof, than all vain glory and pomp.

Nevertheless, he builded a fitting and neat habitation, in the which he ruminated his voyage and philosophy, and reduced them together in a true memorial. In this house he spent a great time in the mathematics, and made many fine instruments, *ex omnibus hujus artis partibus*, whereof there is but little remaining to us, as hereafter you shall understand.

After five years came again into his mind the wished for Reformation ; and in regard [of it] he doubted of the ayd and help of others, although he himself was painful, lusty, and unwearisom ; howsoever he undertook, with some few adjoyned with him, to attempt the same. Wherefore he desired to that end to have out of his first cloyster (to the which he bare a great affection) three of his brethren, Brother G. V., Brother I. A., and Brother I. O., who had some more knowledge of the arts than at that time many others had. He did bind those three unto himself, to be faithful, diligent, and secret, as also to commit carefully to writing all that which he should direct and instruct them in, to the end that those which were to come, and through especial revelation should be received into this Fraternity, might not be deceived of the least sillable and word.

After this manner began the Fraternity of the Rosie Cross—first, by four persons onely, and by them was made the magical language and writing, with a large dictionary, which we yet dayly use to God's praise and glory, and do finde great wisdom therein. They made also the first part of the Book M, but in respect that that labour was too heavy, and the unspeakable concourse of the sick hindred them, and also whilst his new building (called *Sancti Spiritus*) was

now finished, they concluded to draw and receive yet others more into their Fraternity. To this end was chosen Brother R. C., his deceased father's brother's son ; Brother B., a skilful painter ; G. G., and P. D., their secretary, all Germans except L. A., so in all they were eight in number, all batchelors and of vowed virginity, by whom was collected a book or volumn of all that which man can desire, wish, or hope for.

Although we do now freely confess that the world is much amended within an hundred years, yet we are assured that our Axiomata shall immovably remain unto the world's end, and also the world in her highest and last age shall not attain to see anything else; for our ROTA takes her beginning from that day when God spake *Fiat* and shall end when he shall speak *Pereat* ; yet God's clock striketh every minute, where ours scarce striketh perfect hours. We also stedfastly beleeve, that if our Brethren and Fathers had lived in this our present and clear light, they would more roughly have handled the Pope, Mahomet, scribes, artists, and sophisters, and showed themselves more helpful, not simply with sighs and wishing of their end and consummation.

When now these eight Brethren had disposed and ordered all things in such manner, as there was not now need of any great labour, and also that every one was sufficiently instructed and able perfectly to discourse of secret and manifest philosophy, they would not remain any longer together, but, as in the beginning they had agreed, they separated themselves into several countries, because that not only their Axiomata might in secret be more profoundly examined by the learned, but that they themselves, if in some country or other they observed anything, or perceived some error, might inform one another of it.

Their agreement was this :—

First, That none of them should profess any other thing then to cure the sick, and that gratis.

Second, None of the posterity should be constrained to wear one certain kind of habit, but therein to follow the custom of the country.

Third, That every year, upon the day C., they should meet together at the house *Sancti Spiritus*, or write the cause of his absence.

Fourth, Every Brother should look about for a worthy person who, after his decease, might succeed him.

Fifth, The word R. C. should be their seal, mark, and character.

Sixth, The Fraternity should remain secret one hundred years.

These six articles they bound themselves one to another to keep ; five of the Brethren departed, onely the Brethren B. and D. remained with the Father, Brother R. C., a whole year. When these likewise departed, then remained by him his cousen and Brother I. O., so that he hath all the days of his life with him two of his Brethren. And although that as yet the Church was not cleansed, nevertheless, we know that they did think of her, and what with longing desire they looked for. Every year they assembled together with joy, and made a full resolution of that which they had done. There must certainly have been great pleasure to hear truly and without invention related and rehearsed all the wonders which God hath poured out here and there throughout the world. Every one may hold it out for certain, that such persons as were sent, and joyned together by God and the Heavens, and chosen out of the wisest of men as have lived in many ages, did live together

above all others in highest unity, greatest secrecy, and most kindness one towards another.

After such a most laudable sort they did spend their lives, but although they were free from all diseases and pain, yet, notwithstanding, they could not live and pass their time appointed of God. The first of this Fraternity which dyed, and that in England, was I. O., as Brother C. long before had foretold him; he was very expert, and well learned in Cabala, as his Book called H witnesseth. In England he is much spoken of, and chiefly because he cured a young Earl of Norfolk of the leprosie. They had concluded, that, as much as possibly could be, their burial place should be kept secret, as at this day it is not known unto us what is become of some of them, yet every one's place was supplied with a fit successor. But this we will confesse publickly by these presents, to the honour of God, that what secret soever we have learned out of the book M, although before our eyes we behold the image and pattern of all the world, yet are there not shewn unto us our misfortunes, nor hour of death, the which only is known to God Himself, who thereby would have us keep in a continual readiness. But hereof more in our Confession, where we do set down thirty-seven reasons wherefore we now do make known our Fraternity, and proffer such high mysteries freely, without constraint and reward. Also we do promise more gold then both the Indies bring to the King of Spain, for Europe is with child, and will bring forth a strong child, who shall stand in need of a great godfather's gift.

After the death of I. O., Brother R. C. rested not, but, as soon as he could, called the rest together, and then, as we suppose, his grave was made, although hitherto we (who

were the latest) did not know when our loving Father R. C. died, and had no more but the bare names of the beginners, and all their successors to us. Yet there came into our memory a secret, which, through dark and hidden words and speeches of the hundred years, Brother A., the successor of D. (who was of the last and second row of succession, and had lived amongst many of us), did impart unto us of the third row and succession; otherwise we must confess, that after the death of the said A., none of us had in any manner known anything of Brother C. R., and of his first fellow-brethren, then that which was extant of them in our philosophical BIBLIOTHECA, amongst which our AXIOMATA was held for the chiefest, ROTA MUNDI for the most artificial, and PROTHEUS for the most profitable. Likewise, we do not certainly know if these of the second row have been of like wisdom as the first, and if they were admitted to all things.

It shall be declared hereafter to the gentle reader not onely what we have heard of the burial of Brother R. C., but also it shall be made manifest publicly, by the foresight, sufferance, and commandment of God, whom we most faithfully obey, that if we shall be answered discreetly and Christian-like, we will not be ashamed to set forth publicly in print our names and surnames, our meetings, or anything else that may be required at our hands.

Now, the true and fundamental relation of the finding out of the high-illuminated man of God, *Fra: C. R. C.*, is this:—After that A. in *Gallia Narbonensi* was deceased, there succeeded in his place our loving Brother N. N. This man, after he had repaired unto us to take the solemn oath of fidelity and secrecy, informed us *bona fide*, that A. had comforted him in telling him, that this Fraternity should

ere long not remain so hidden, but should be to all the whole German nation helpful, needful, and commendable, of the which he was not in anywise in his estate ashamed. The year following, after he had performed his school right, and was minded now to travel, being for that purpose sufficiently provided with Fortunatus' purse, he thought (he being a good architect) to alter something of his building, and to make it more fit. In such renewing, he lighted upon the Memorial Table, which was cast of brasse, and containeth all the names of the Brethren, with some few other things. This he would transfer into another more fitting vault, for where or when Brother R. C. died, or in what country he was buried, was by our predecessors concealed and unknown unto us. In this table stuck a great naile somewhat strong, so that when it was with force drawn out it took with it an indifferent big stone out of the thin wall or plaistering of the hidden door, and so unlooked for uncovered the door, whereat we did with joy and longing throw down the rest of the wall and cleared the door, upon which was written in great letters—

Post CXX Annos Patebo,

with the year of the Lord under it. Therefore we gave God thanks, and let it rest that same night, because first we would overlook our *Rota*—but we refer ourselves again to the Confession, for what we here publish is done for the help of those that are worthy, but to the unworthy, God willing, it will be small profit. For like as our door was after so many years wonderfully discovered, also there shall be opened a door to Europe (when the wall is removed), which already doth begin to appear, and with great desire is expected of many.

In the morning following we opened the door, and there appeared to our sight a vault of seven sides and seven corners, every side five foot broad, and the height of eight foot. Although the sun never shined in this vault, nevertheless, it was enlightened with another sun, which had learned this from the sun, and was situated in the upper part in the center of the sieling. In the midst, instead of a tomb-stone, was a round altar, covered with a plate of brass, and thereon this engraven :—

A. C. R. C. *Hoc universi compendium unius mihi
sepulchrum feci.*

Round about the first circle or brim stood,

Jesus mihi omnia.

In the middle were four figures, inclosed in circles, whose circumscription was,

1. *Nequaquam Vacuum.*
2. *Legis Jugum.*
3. *Libertas Evangelii.*
4. *Dei Gloria Intacta.*

This is all clear and bright, as also the seventh side and the two heptagons. So we kneeled down altogether, and gave thanks to the sole wise, sole mighty, and sole eternal God, who hath taught us more than all men's wits could have found out, praised be His holy name. This vault we parted in three parts, the upper part or sieling, the wall or side, the ground or floor. Of the upper part you shall understand no more at this time but that it was divided according to the seven sides in the triangle which was in the bright center ; but what therein is contained you (that are desirous of our Society) shall, God willing, behold the same with your own eyes. Every side or wall is parted into ten squares, every one with their several figures and sentences,

as they are truly shewed and set forth *concentratum* here in our book. The bottom again is parted in the triangle, but because therein is described the power and rule of the Inferior Governors, we leave to manifest the same, for fear of the abuse by the evil and ungodly world. But those that are provided and stored with the Heavenly Antidote, do without fear or hurt, tread on and bruise the head of the old and evil serpent, which this our age is well fitted for. Every side or wall had a door for a chest, wherein there lay divers things, especially all our books, which otherwise we had, besides the *Vocabulario* of Theophrastus Paracelsus of Hohenheim, and these which daily unfalsifieth we do participate. Herein also we found his *Itinerarium* and *Vita*, whence this relation for the most part is taken. In another chest were looking-glasses of divers virtues, as also in other places were little bells, burning lamps, and chiefly wonderful artificial songs—generally all was done to that end, that if it should happen, after many hundred years, the Fraternity should come to nothing, they might by this onely vault be restored again.

Now, as we had not yet seen the dead body of our careful and wise Father, we therefore removed the altar aside; then we lifted up a strong plate of brass, and found a fair and worthy body, whole and unconsumed, as the same is here lively counterfeited,¹ with all the ornaments and attires. In his hand he held a parchment called T,² the

¹ The illustration which is here referred to is, singularly enough, not reproduced in the text of the translation, and it is also absent from the Dutch version of 1617. As there are no other editions of the "*Fama Fraternitatis*" in the Library of the British Museum, I also am unable to gratify the curiosity of my readers by a copy of the original engraving.

² In the English translation the letter I has been substituted by a typographical error, or by an error of transcription for the T which is found in all the German editions.

which next unto the Bible is our greatest treasure, which ought not to be delivered to the censure of the world. At the end of this book standeth this following *Elogium*.

Granum pectori Jesu insitum.

C. R. C. ex nobili atque splendida Germaniæ R. C. familia oriundus, vir sui seculi divinis revelationibus, subtilissimis imaginationibus, indefessis laboribus ad cœlestia atque humana mysteria; arcanavè admissus postquam suam (quam Arabico at Africano itineribus collejerat) plus quam regiam, atque imperatoriam Gazam suo seculo nondum convenientem, posteritati eruendam custodivisset et jam suarum Artium, ut et nominis, fides ac conjunctissimos heredes instituisset, mundum minutum omnibus motibus magno illi respondentem fabricasset hocque tandem preteritarum, præsentium, et futurarum, rerum compendio extracto, centenario major, non morbo (quem ipse nunquam corpore expertus erat, nunquam alios infestare sinebat) ullo pellente sed Spiritus Dei evocante, illuminatam animam (inter Fratrum amplexus et ultima oscula) fidelissimo Creatori Deo reddidisset, Pater delictissimus, Frater suavissimus, præceptor fidelissimus, amicus integerimus, a suis ad 120 annos hic absconditus est.

Underneath they had subscribed themselves,

1. *Fra. I. A. Fra. C. H. electione Fraternitatis caput.*
2. *Fra. G. V. M. P. C.*
3. *Fra. F. R. C., Junior hæres S. Spiritus.*
4. *Fra. F. B. M. P. A., Pictor et Architectus.*
5. *Fra. G. G. M. P. L., Cabalista.*

Secundi Circuli.

1. *Fra. P. A. Successor, Fra. I. O., Mathematicus.*
2. *Fra. A. Successor, Fra. P. D.*

3. *Fra. R. Successor Patris C. R. C., cum Christo triumphantis.*

At the end was written,

Ex Deo nascimur, in Jesu morimur, per Spiritum Sanctum reviviscimus.

At that time was already dead, Brother I. O. and Brother D., but their burial place where is it to be found? We doubt not but our *Fra. Senior* hath the same, and some especial thing layd in earth, and perhaps likewise hidden. We also hope that this our example will stir up others more diligently to enquire after their names (which we have therefore published), and to search for the place of their burial; the most part of them, by reason of their practice and physick, are yet known and praised among very old folks; so might perhaps our GAZA be enlarged, or, at least, be better cleared.

Concerning *Minutum Mundum*, we found it kept in another little altar, truly more finer then can be imagined by any understanding man, but we will leave him undescribed untill we shall be truly answered upon this our true-hearted FAMA. So we have covered it again with the plates, and set the altar thereon, shut the door and made it sure with all our seals. Moreover, by instruction, and command of our ROTA, there are come to sight some books, among which is contained M (which were made instead of household care by the praiseworthy M. P.). Finally, we departed the one from the other, and left the natural heirs in possession of our jewels. And so we do expect the answer and judgment of the learned and unlearned.

Howbeit we know after a time there will now be a general reformation, both of divine and humane things, according to our desire and the expectation of others; for

it is fitting, that before the rising of the Sun there should appear and break forth *Aurora*, or some clearness, or divine light in the sky. And so, in the meantime, some few, which shall give their names, may joyn together, thereby to increase the number and respect of our Fraternity, and make a happy and wished for beginning of our PHILOSOPHICAL CANONS, prescribed to us by our Brother R. C., and be partakers with us of our treasures (which never can fail or be wasted) in all humility and love, to be eased of this world's labours, and not walk so blindly in the knowledge of the wonderful works of God.

But that also every Christian may know of what Religion and belief we are, we confess to have the knowledge of Jesus Christ (as the same now in these last days, and chiefly in Germany, most clear and pure is professed, and is now adays cleansed and voyd of all swerving people, hereticks, and false prophets), in certain and noted countries maintained, defended, and propagated. Also we use two Sacraments, as they are instituted with all Formes and Ceremonies of the first and renewed Church. In *Politia* we acknowledge the Roman Empire and *Quartam Monarchiam* for our Christian head, albeit we know what alterations be at hand, and would fain impart the same with all our hearts to other godly learned men, notwithstanding our handwriting which is in our hands, no man (except God alone) can make it common, nor any unworthy person is able to bereave us of it. But we shall help with secret aid this so good a cause, as God shall permit or hinder us. For our God is not blinde, as the heathen's *Fortuna*, but is the Churches' ornament and the honour of the Temple. Our Philosophy also is not a new invention, but as Adam

after his fall hath received it, and as Moses and Solomon used it, also it ought not much to be doubted of, or contradicted by other opinions, or meanings; but seeing the truth is peaceable, brief, and always like herself in all things, and especially accorded by with *Jesus in omni parte* and all members, and as He is the true image of the Father, so is she His image, so it shal not be said, This is true according to Philosophy, but true according to Theologie; and wherein Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras, and others did hit the mark, and wherein Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Solomon, did excel, but especially wherewith that wonderful book the Bible agreeth. All that same concurreth together, and maketh a sphere or globe whose total parts are equidistant from the center, as hereof more at large and more plain shal be spoken of in Christianly Conference (in den Boecke des Levens).

But now concerning, and chiefly in this our age, the ungodly and accursed gold-making, which hath gotten so much the upper hand, whereby under colour of it, many runagates and roguish people do use great villainies, and cozen and abuse the credit which is given them; yea, now adays men of discretion do hold the transmutation of metals to be the highest point and *fastigium* in philosophy. This is all their intent and desire, and that God would be most esteemed by them and honoured which could make great store of gold, the which with unpremeditate prayers they hope to obtain of the alknowing God and searcher of all hearts; but we by these presents publicly testifie, that the true philosophers are far of another minde, esteeming little the making of gold, which is but a *paragon*, for besides that they have a thousand better things. We say

with our loving Father C. R. C., *Phy. aurum nisi quantum aurum*, for unto him the whole nature is detected; he doth not rejoyce that he can make gold, and that, as saith Christ, the devils are obedient unto him, but is glad that he seeth the Heavens open, the angels of God ascending and descending, and his name written in the book of life.

Also we do testifie that, under the name of *Chymia*, many books and pictures are set forth in *Contumeliam gloriæ Dei*, as we wil name them in their due season, and wil give to the pure-hearted a catalogue or register of them. We pray all learned men to take heed of these kinde of books, for the Enemy never resteth, but soweth his weeds til a stronger one doth root them out.

So, according to the wil and meaning of *Fra. C. R. C.*, we his brethren request again all the learned in Europe who shal read (sent forth in five languages) this our *Fama* and *Confessio*, that it would please them with good deliberation to ponder this our offer, and to examine most nearly and sharply their arts, and behold the present time with all diligence, and to declare their minde, either *communicato consilio*, or *singulatim* by print. And although at this time we make no mention either of our names or meetings, yet nevertheless every one's opinion shal assuredly come to our hands, in what language so ever it be, nor any body shal fail, whoso gives but his name, to speak with some of us, either by word of mouth, or else, if there be some lett, in writing. And this we say for a truth, that whosoever shal earnestly, and from his heart, bear affection unto us, it shal be beneficial to him in goods, body, and soul; but he that is false-hearted, or onely greedy of riches, the same

first of all shal not be able in any manner of wise to hurt us, but bring himself to utter ruine and destruction. Also our building, although one hundred thousand people had very near seen and beheld the same, shal for ever remain untouched, undestroyed, and hidden to the wicked world.

Sub umbra alarum tuarum, Jehova.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONFESSION OF THE ROSICRUCIAN FRATERNITY, ADDRESSED TO THE LEARNED OF EUROPE.

THE translation of this manifesto which follows the Fama in the edition accredited by the great name of Eugenius Philalethes is prolix and careless: being made not from the Latin original but from the later German version. As a relic of English Rosicrucian literature I have wished to preserve it, and having subjected it to a searching revision throughout, it now represents the original with sufficient fidelity for all practical purposes. The "*Confessio Fraternitatis*" appeared in the year 1615 in a Latin work entitled "*Secretioris Philosophiæ Consideratio Brevis à Philippo à Gabella, Philosophiæ studioso, conscripta; et nunc primum unâ cum Confessione Fraternitatis R. C., in lucem edita, Cassellis, excudebat G. Wesselius, a 1615, Quarto.*" It was prefaced by the following advertisement:—

"Here, gentle reader, you shall finde incorporated in our Confession thirty-seven reasons of our purpose and intention, the which according to thy pleasure thou mayst seek out and compare together, considering within thyself if they be sufficient to allure thee. Verily, it requires no small pains to induce any one to believe what doth not yet appear, but when it shall be revealed in the full blaze of day, I suppose we should be ashamed of such questionings. And as we do now securely call the Pope Antichrist, which was

formerly a capital offence in every place, so we know certainly that what we here keep secret we shall in the future thunder forth with uplifted voice, the which, reader, with us desire with all thy heart that it may happen most speedily.

“FRATRES R. C.”

Confessio Fraternitatis R. C. ad Eruditos Europæ.

CHAPTER I.

Whatsoever you have heard, O mortals, concerning our Fraternity by the trumpet sound of the Fama R. C., do not either believe it hastily, or wilfully suspect it. It is Jehovah who, seeing how the world is falling to decay, and near to its end, doth hasten it again to its beginning, inverting the course of Nature, and so what heretofore hath been sought with great pains and dayly labor He doth lay open now to those thinking of no such thing, offering it to the willing and thrusting it on the reluctant, that it may become to the good that which will smooth the troubles of human life and break the violence of unexpected blows of Fortune, but to the ungodly that which will augment their sins and their punishments.

Although we believe ourselves to have sufficiently unfolded to you in the *Fama* the nature of our order, wherein we follow the will of our most excellent father, nor can by any be suspected of heresy, nor of any attempt against the commonwealth, we hereby do condemn the East and the West (meaning the Pope and Mahomet) for their blasphemies against our Lord Jesus Christ, and offer to the chief head of the Roman Empire our prayers, secrets, and great treasures of gold. Yet we have thought good for the sake of

the learned to add somewhat more to this, and make a better explanation, if there be anything too deep, hidden, and set down over dark, in the Fama, or for certain reasons altogether omitted, whereby we hope the learned will be more addicted unto us, and easier to approve our counsel.

CHAPTER II.

Concerning the amendment of philosophy, we have (as much as at this present is needful) declared that the same is altogether weak and faulty ; nay, whilst many (I know not how) alledge that she is sound and strong, to us it is certain that she fetches her last breath.

But as commonly even in the same place where there breaketh forth a new disease, nature discovereth a remedy against the same, so amidst so many infirmities of philosophy there do appear the right means, and unto our Fatherland sufficiently offered, whereby she may become sound again, and new or renovated may appear to a renovated world.

No other philosophy we have then that which is the head of all the faculties, sciences, and arts, the which (if we behold our age) containeth much of Theology and Medicine, but little of Jurisprudence ; which searcheth heaven and earth with exquisite analysis, or, to speak briefly thereof, which doth sufficiently manifest the Microsmus man, whereof if some of the more orderly in the number of the learned shall respond to our fraternal invitation, they shall find among us far other and greater wonders then those they heretofore did believe, marvel at, and profess.

CHAPTER III.

Wherefore, to declare briefly our meaning hereof, it becomes us to labor carefully that the surprise of our chal-

lenge may be taken from you, to shew plainly that such secrets are not lightly esteemed by us, and not to spread an opinion abroad among the vulgar that the story concerning them is a foolish thing. For it is not absurd to suppose many are overwhelmed with the conflict of thought which is occasioned by our unhop'd graciousness, unto whom (as yet) be unknown the wonders of the sixth age, or who, by reason of the course of the world, esteem the things to come like unto the present, and, hindered by the obstacles of their age, live no otherwise in the world then as men blind, who, in the light of noon, discern nothing onely by feeling.

CHAPTER IV.

Now concerning the first part, we hold that the meditations of our Christian father on all subjects which from the creation of the world have been invented, brought forth, and propagated by human ingenuity, through God's revelation, or through the service of Angels or spirits, or through the sagacity of understanding, or through the experience of long observation, are so great, that if all books should perish, and by God's almighty sufferance all writings and all learning should be lost, yet posterity will be able thereby to lay a new foundation of sciences, and to erect a new citadel of truth; the which perhaps would not be so hard to do as if one should begin to pull down and destroy the old, ruinous building, then enlarge the fore-court, afterwards bring light into the private chambers, and then change the doors, staples, and other things according to our intention.

Therefore, it must not be expected that new comers shall attain at once all our weighty secrets. They must proceed

step by step from the smaller to the greater, and must not be retarded by difficulties.

Wherefore should we not freely acquiesce in the onely truth then seek through so many windings and labyrinths, if onely it had pleased God to lighten unto us the sixth Candelabrum ? Were it not sufficient for us to fear neither hunger, poverty, diseases, nor age ? Were it not an excellent thing to live always so as if you had lived from the beginning of the world, and should still live to the end thereof ? So to live in one place that neither the people which dwel beyond the Ganges could hide anything, nor those which live in Peru might be able to keep secret their counsels from thee ? So to read in one onely book as to discern, understand, and remember whatsoever in all other books (which heretofore have been, are now, and hereafter shal come out) hath been, is, and shal be learned out of them ? So to sing or to play that instead of stony rocks you could draw pearls, instead of wild beasts spirits, and instead of Pluto you could soften the mighty princes of the world ? O mortals, diverse is the counsel of God and your convenience, Who hath decreed at this time to encrease and enlarge the number of our Fraternity, the which we with such joy have undertaken, as we have heretofore obtained this great treasure without our merits, yea, without any hope or expectation ; the same we purpose with such fidelity to put in practice, that neither compassion nor pity for our own children (which some of us in the Fraternity have) shal move us, since we know that these unhopd for good things cannot be inherited, nor be conferred promiscuously.

CHAPTER V.

If there be any body now which on the other side wil complain of our discretion, that we offer our treasures so freely and indiscriminately, and do not rather regard more the godly, wise, or princely persons then the common people, with him we are in no wise angry (for the accusation is not without moment), but withall we affirm that we have by no means made common property of our arcana, albeit they resound in five languages within the ears of the vulgar, both because, as we well know, they will not move gross wits, and because the worth of those who shal be accepted into our Fraternity will not be measured by their curiosity, but by the rule and pattern of our revelations. A thousand times the unworthy may clamour, a thousand times may present themselves, yet God hath commanded our ears that they should hear none of them, and hath so compassed us about with His clouds that unto us, His servants, no violence can be done; wherefore now no longer are we beheld by human eyes, unless they have received strength borrowed from the eagle.

For the rest, it hath been necessary that the Fama should be set forth in everyone's mother tongue, lest those should not be defrauded of the knowledge thereof, whom (although they be unlearned) God hath not excluded from the happiness of this Fraternity, which is divided into degrees; as those which dwell in Damcar, who have a far different politick order from the other Arabians; for there do govern onely understanding men, who, by the king's permission, make particular laws, according unto which example the government shall also be instituted in Europe (according to the description set down by our Christianly Father), when

that shal come to pass which must precede, when our Trumpet shall resound with full voice and with no prevarications of meaning, when, namely, those things of which a few now whisper and darken with enigmas, shall openly fill the earth, even as after many secret chafings of pious people against the pope's tyranny, and after timid reproof, he with great violence and by a great onset was cast down from his seat and abundantly trodden under foot, whose final fall is reserved for an age when he shall be torn in pieces with nails, and a final groan shall end his ass's braying, the which, as we know, is already manifest to many learned men in Germany, as their tokens and secret congratulations bear witness.

CHAPTER VI.

We could here relate and declare what all the time from the year 1378 (when our Christian father was born) till now hath happened, what alterations he hath seen in the world these one hundred and six years of his life, what he left after his happy death to be attempted by our Fathers and by us, but brevity, which we do observe, will not permit at this present to make rehearsal of it; it is enough for those which do not despise our declaration to have touched upon it, thereby to prepare the way for their more close union and association with us. Truly, to whom it is permitted to behold, read, and thenceforward teach himself those great characters which the Lord God hath inscribed upon the world's mechanism, and which He repeats through the mutations of Empires, such an one is already ours, though as yet unknown to himself; and as we know he will not neglect our invitation, so, in like manner, we abjure all deceit, for we promise that no man's uprightness and hopes

shall deceive him who shall make himself known to us under the seal of secrecy and desire our familiarity. But to the false and to impostors, and to those who seek other things than wisdom, we witness by these presents publicly, we cannot be betrayed unto them to our hurt, nor be known to them without the will of God, but they shall certainly be partakers of that terrible commination spoken of in our Fama, and their impious designs shall fall back upon their own heads, while our treasures shall remain untouched, till the Lion shall arise and exact them as his right, receive and imploy them for the establishment of his kingdom.

CHAPTER VII.

One thing should here, O mortals, be established by us, that God hath decreed to the world before her end, which presently thereupon shall ensue, an influx of truth, light, and grandeur, such as he commanded should accompany Adam from Paradise and sweeten the misery of man: Wherefore there shall cease all falshood, darkness, and bondage, which little by little, with the great globe's revolution, hath crept into the arts, works, and governments of men, darkening the greater part of them. Thence hath proceeded that innumerable diversity of persuasions, falsities, and heresies, which makes choice difficult to the wisest men, seeing on the one part they were hindered by the reputation of philosophers and on the other by the facts of experience, which if (as we trust) it can be once removed, and instead thereof a single and self-same rule be instituted, then there will indeed remain thanks unto them which have taken pains therein, but the sum of the so great work shall be attributed to the blessedness of our age.

As we now confess that many high intelligences by their writings will be a great furtherance unto this Reformation which is to come, so do we by no means arrogate to ourselves this glory, as if such a work were onely imposed on us, but we testify with our Saviour Christ, that sooner shall the stones rise up and offer their service, then there shall be any want of executors of God's counsel.

CHAPTER VIII.

God, indeed, hath already sent messengers which should testifie His will, to wit, some new stars which have appeared in *Serpentarius* and *Cygnus*, the which powerful signs of a great Council shew forth how for all things which human ingenuity discovers, God calls upon His hidden knowledge, as likewise the Book of Nature, though it stands open truly for all eyes, can be read or understood by only a very few.

As in the human head there are two organs of hearing, two of sight, and two of smell, but onely one of speech, and it were but vain to expect speech from the ears, or hearing from the eyes, so there have been ages which have seen, others which have heard, others again that have smelt and tasted. Now, there remains that in a short and swiftly approaching time honour should be likewise given to the tongue, that what formerly saw, heard, and smelt shall finally speak, after the world shall have slept away the intoxication of her poisoned and stupefying chalice, and with an open heart, bare head, and naked feet shall merrily and joyfully go forth to meet the sun rising in the morning.

CHAPTER IX.

These characters and letters, as God hath here and there incorporated them in the Sacred Scriptures, so hath He imprinted them most manifestly on the wonderful work of creation, on the heavens, the earth, and on all beasts, so that as the mathematician predicts eclipses, so we prognosticate the obscurations of the church, and how long they shall last. From these letters we have borrowed our magick writing, and thence have made for ourselves a new language, in which the nature of things is expressed, so that it is no wonder that we are not so eloquent in other tongues, least of all in this Latin, which we know to be by no means in agreement with that of Adam and of Enoch, but to have been contaminated by the confusion of Babel.¹

CHAPTER X.

But this also must by no means be omitted, that, while there are yet some eagle's feathers in our way, the which do hinder our purpose, we do exhort to the sole, onely, assiduous, and continual study of the Sacred Scriptures, for he that taketh all his pleasures therein shall know that he hath prepared for himself an excellent way to come into our Fraternity, for this is the whole sum of our Laws, that as there is not a character in that great miracle of the world which has not a claim on the memory, so those are nearest and likest unto us who do make the Bible the rule of their life, the end of all their studies, and the compendium of the universal world, from whom we require not that it should be continually in their mouth, but that they should

¹ The original reads *Babylonis confusione*, "by the confusion of Babylon."

appropriately apply its true interpretation to all ages of the world, for it is not our custom so to debase the divine oracle, that while there are innumerable expounders of the same, some adhere to the opinions of their party, some make sport of Scripture as if it were a tablet of wax to be indifferently made use of by theologians, philosophers, doctors, and mathematicians. Be it ours rather to bear witness, that from the beginning of the world there hath not been given to man a more excellent, admirable, and wholesome book then the Holy Bible; Blessed is he who possesses it, more blessed is he who reads it, most blessed of all is he who truly understandeth it, while he is most like to God who both understands and obeys it.

CHAPTER XI.

Now, whatsoever hath been said in the Fama, through hatred of impostors, against the transmutation of metals and the supreme medicine of the world, we desire to be so understood, that this so great gift of God we do in no manner set at naught, but as it bringeth not always with it the knowledge of Nature, while this knowledge bringeth forth both that and an infinite number of other natural miracles, it is right that we be rather earnest to attain to the knowledge of philosophy, nor tempt excellent wits to the tincture of metals sooner then to the observation of Nature. He must needs be insatiable to whom neither poverty, diseases, nor danger can any longer reach, who, as one raised above all men, hath rule over that which doth anguish, afflict, and pain others, yet will give himself again to idle things, will build, make wars, and domineer, because he hath of gold sufficient, and of silver an inexhaust-

ible fountain. God judgeth far otherwise, who exalteth the lowly, and casteth the proud into obscurity ; to the silent he sendeth his angels to hold speech with them, but the babblers he driveth into the wilderness, which is the judgment due to the Roman impostor who now poureth his blasphemies with open mouth against Christ, nor yet in the full light, by which Germany hath detected his caves and subterranean passages, will abstain from lying, that thereby he may fulfil the measure of his sin, and be found worthy of the axe. Therefore, one day it will come to pass, that the mouth of this viper shall be stopped, and his triple crown shall be brought to nought, of which things more fully when we shall have met together.

CHAPTER XII.

For conclusion of our Confession we must earnestly admonish you, that you cast away, if not all, yet most of the worthless books of pseudo chymists, to whom it is a jest to apply the Most Holy Trinity to vain things, or to deceive men with monstrous symbols and enigmas, or to profit by the curiosity of the credulous ; our age doth produce many such, one of the greatest being a stage-player, a man with sufficient ingenuity for imposition ; such doth the enemy of human welfare mingle among the good seed, thereby to make the truth more difficult to be believed, which in herself is simple and naked, while falsehood is proud, haughty, and coloured with a lustre of seeming godly and humane wisdom. Ye that are wise eschew such books, and have recourse to us, who seek not your moneys, but offer unto you most willingly our great treasures. We hunt not after your goods with invented lying tinctures, but desire to make you partakers of our goods. We do not reject par-

ables, but invite you to the clear and simple explanation of all secrets ; we seek not to be received of you, but call you unto our more then kingly houses and palaces, by no motion of our own, but (lest you be ignorant of it) as forced thereto by the Spirit of God, commanded by the testament of our most excellent Father, and impelled by the occasion of this present time.

CHAPTER XIII.

What think you, therefore, O Mortals, seeing that we sincerely confess Christ, execrate the pope, addict ourselves to the true philosophy, lead a worthy life, and dayly call, intreat, and invite many more unto our Fraternity, unto whom the same Light of God likewise appeareth? Consider you not that, having pondered the gifts which are in you, having measured your understanding in the Word of God, and having weighed the imperfection and inconsistencies of all the arts, you may at length in the future deliberate with us upon their remedy, co-operate in the work of God, and be serviceable to the constitution of your time? On which work these profits will follow, that all those goods which Nature hath dispersed in every part of the earth shall at one time and altogether be given to you, *tanquam in centro solis et lune*. Then shall you be able to expel from the world all those things which darken human knowledge and hinder action, such as the vain (astronomical) epicycles and eccentric circles.

CHAPTER XIV.

You, however, for whom it is enough to be serviceable out of curiosity to any ordinance, or who are dazzled by the glistening of gold, or who, though now upright, might

be led away by such unexpected great riches into an effeminate, idle, luxurious, and pompous life, do not disturb our sacred silence by your clamour, but think, that although there be a medicine which might fully cure all diseases, yet those whom God wishes to try or to chastise shall not be abetted by such an opportunity, so that if we were able to enrich and instruct the whole world, and liberate it from innumerable hardships, yet shall we never be manifested unto any man unless God should favour it, yea, it shall be so far from him who thinks to be partaker of our riches against the will of God that he shall sooner lose his life in seeking us, then attain happiness by finding us.

FRATERNITAS R. C.



CHAPTER V.

THE CHYMICAL MARRIAGE OF CHRISTIAN ROSENCREUTZ.

THE whole Rosicrucian controversy centres in this publication, which Buhle describes as "a comic romance of extraordinary talent." It was first published at Strasbourg in the year 1616, but, as will be seen in the seventh chapter, it is supposed to have existed in manuscript as early as 1601-2, thus antedating by a long period the other Rosicrucian books. Two editions of the German original are preserved in the Library of the British Museum, both bearing the date 1616.¹ It was translated into English for the first time in 1690, under the title of "The Hermetic Romance: or The Chymical Wedding. Written in High Dutch by Christian Rosencreutz. Translated by E. Foxcroft, late Fellow of King's Colledge in Cambridge. Licensed and entered according to Order. Printed by A. Sowle, at the Crooked Billet in Holloway-Lane, Shoreditch; and Sold at the Three-Keys in Nags-Head-Court, Gracechurch-street." It is this translation in substance, that is, compressed by the omission of all irrelevant matter and dispensable prolixities, which I now offer to the reader.

¹ "Chymische Hochzeit: Christiani Rosencreutz. Anno 1459. Erstlick Gedruckt zu Strasbourg. Anno M.DC.XVI." The second edition was printed by Conrad Echer.

The Chymical Marriage of Christian Rosencreutz. Anno 1459.

*Arcana publicata vilescunt, et gratiam prophanata amittunt.
Ergo: ne Margaritæ objice porcis, seu Asino substernere rosas.*

THE FIRST BOOK.

The First Day.


Meditatio.

On an evening before Easter-day, I sate at a table, and having in my humble prayer conversed with my Creator and considered many great mysteries (whereof the Father of Lights had shewn me not a few), and being now ready to prepare in my heart, together with my dear Paschal Lamb, a small, unleavened, undefiled cake, all on a sudden ariseth so horrible a tempest, that I imagined no other but that, through its mighty force, the hill whereon my little house was founded would fly all in pieces. But inasmuch as this, and the like, from the devil (who had done me many a spight) was no new thing to me, I took courage, and persisted in my meditation till somebody touched me on the back, whereupon I was so hugely terrified that I durst hardly look about me, yet I shewed myself as cheerful as humane frailty would permit. Now the same thing still twitching me several times by the coat, I glanced back and behold it was

Proteconissa

a fair and glorious lady, whose garments were all skye-colour, and curiously bespangled with golden stars. In her right hand she bare a trumpet of beaten gold, whereon a Name was ingraven which I could well read but am forbidden as yet to reveal. In her left hand she had a great bundle of letters in all languages, which she (as I afterwards understood) was to carry into all countries. She had also large and beautiful wings, full of eyes throughout, wherewith she

could mount aloft, and flye swifter than any eagle. As soon as I turned about, she looked through her letters, and at length drew out a small one, which, with great reverence, she laid upon the table, and, without one word, departed from me. But in her mounting upward, she gave so mighty a blast on her gallant trumpet that the whole hill echoed thereof, and for a full quarter of an hour afterward I could hardly hear my own words.

In so unlooked for an adventure I was at a loss how to advise myself, and, therefore, fell upon my knees, and besought my Creator to permit nothing contrary to my eternal happiness to befall me, whereupon, with fear and trembling, I went to the letter, which was now so heavy as almost to *Epiatola* outweigh gold. As I was diligently viewing it, I found a little Seal, whereupon was ingraven a curious Cross, with *Sigillum* this inscription IN HOC SIGNO  VINCES.

As soon as I espied this sign I was comforted, not being ignorant that it was little acceptable, and much less useful, to the devil. Whereupon I tenderly opened the letter, and within it, in an azure field, in golden letters, found the following verses written :—

“ This day, this day, this, this
The Royal Wedding is,
Art thou thereto by birth inclined,
And unto joy of God design'd ?
Then may'st thou to the mountain tend
Whereon three stately Temples stand,
And there see all from end to end.
Keep watch and ward,
Thyself regard ;
Unless with diligence thou bathe,
The Wedding can't thee harmless save :
He'll damage have that here delays ;
Let him beware too light that weighs.”



Underneath stood *Sponsus* and *Sponsa*.

De Nuptiis.

Requisita in
hospitibus.
Secundum, 7.
Pondera.

1. Electio
incerta.

2. Inocitia
Ignorantia
caecitas
mentis.

3, 4. Naturæ
secreta.
5, 6.

Mundana
affectio.

As soon as I read this letter, I was like to have fainted away, all my hair stood on end, and cold sweat trickled down my whole body. For although I well perceived that this was the appointed wedding whereof seven years before I was acquainted in a bodily vision, and which I had with great earnestness attended, and which, lastly, by the account and calculation of the plannets, I found so to be, yet could I never fore-see that it must happen under so grievous and perilous conditions. For whereas I before imagined that to be a well-come guest, I needed onely to appear at the wedding, I was now directed to Divine Providence, of which until this time I was never certain. I also found, the more I examined myself, that in my head there was onely gross misunderstanding, and blindness in mysterious things, so that I was not able to comprehend even those things which lay under my feet, and which I daily conversed with, much less that I should be born to the searching out and understanding of the secrets of Nature, since, in my opinion, Nature might everywhere find a more virtuous disciple, to whom to intrust her precious, though temporary and changeable treasures. I found also that my bodily behaviour, outward conversation, and brotherly love toward my neighbour was not duly purged and cleansed. Moreover, the tickling of the flesh manifested itself, whose affection was bent only to pomp, bravery, and worldly pride, not to the good of mankind; and I was always contriving how by this art I might in a short time abundantly increase my advantage, rear stately palaces, make myself an everlasting name, and other the like carnal designs. But the obscure words concerning the three Temples did particularly afflict me, which I was not able to make out by

any after-speculation. Thus sticking between hope and fear, examining myself again and again, and finding only my own frailty and impotency, and exceedingly amazed at the fore-mentioned threatening, at length I betook myself to my usual course. After I had finished my most fervent prayer, I laid me down in my bed, that so perchance my good angel by the Divine permission might appear, and (as it had formerly happened) instruct me in this affair, which, to the praise of God, did now likewise fall out. For I was yet scarce asleep when me-thought I, together with a numberless multitude of men, lay fettered with great chains in a dark dungeon, wherein we swarmed like bees one over another, and thus rendered each other's affliction more grievous. But although neither I, nor any of the rest, could see one jot, yet I continually heard one heaving himself above the other, when his chains or fetters were become ever so little lighter. Now as I with the rest had continued a good while in this affliction, and each was still reproaching the other with his blindness and captivity, at length we heard many trumpets sounding together, and kettle-drums beating so artificially thereto, that it rejoiced us even in our calamity.

Preces.

Visio per
sonaliumTurris
Caecitas.

During this noise the cover of the dungeon was lifted up, and a little light let down unto us. Then first might truly have been discerned the bustle we kept, for all went pesle-mesle, and he who perchance had too much heaved up himself was forced down again under the others' feet. In brief, each one strove to be uppermost, neither did I linger, but, with my weighty fetters, slipt from under the rest, and then heaved myself upon a Stone; howbeit, I was several times caught at by others, from whom, as well as I might, I guarded myself with hands and feet. We imagined that

Illustratio.

Magister
carceris.

we should all be set at liberty, which yet fell out quite otherwise, for after the nobles who looked upon us through the hole had recreated themselves with our struggling, a certain hoary-headed man called to us to be quiet, and, having obtained it, began thus to say on :

Vide S.
Bernard,
Serm. 3, de 7
Fragmentis

If wretched mortals would forbear
Themselves to so uphold,
Then sure on them much good confer
My righteous Mother would :
But since the same will not insue,
They must in care and sorrow rue,
And still in prison lie.
Howbeit, my dear Mother will
Their follies over-see,
Her choicest goods permitting still
Too much in Light to be.
Wherefore, in honour of the feast
We this day solemnize,
That so her grace may be increas'd,
A good deed she'll devise ;
For now a cord shall be let down,
And whoso'er can hang thereon
Shall freely be releas'd.

Prima
lectura.

Secunda.

He had scarce done speaking when an Antient Matron commanded her servants to let down the cord seven times into the dungeon, and draw up whomsoever could hang upon it. Good God ! that I could sufficiently describe the hurry that arose amongst us ; every one strove to reach the cord, and only hindred each other. After seven minutes a little bell rang, whereupon at the first pull the servants drew up four. At that time I could not come near the cord, having to my huge misfortune betaken myself to the stone at the wall, whereas the cord descended in the middle. The cord was let down the second time, but divers, because their chains were too heavy, and their hands too tender, could not keep hold on it, and brought down others who else might have

held on fast enough. Nay, many were forcibly pulled off by those who could not themselves get at it, so envious were we even in this misery. But they of all most moved my compassion whose weight was so heavy that they tore their hands from their bodies and yet could not get up. Thus it came to pass that at these five times very few were drawn up, for, as soon as the sign was given, the servants were so nimble at the draught that the most part tumbled one upon another. Whereupon, the greatest part, and even myself, despaired of redemption, and called upon God to have pitty on us, and deliver us out of this obscurity, who also heard some of us, for when the cord came down the sixth time, *Sexta*, some hung themselves fast upon it, and whilst it swung from one side to the other, it came to me, which I suddenly catching, got uppermost, and so beyond all hope came out ; whereat I exceedingly rejoyced, perceiving not the wound which in the drawing up I received on my head by a sharp stone, till I, with the rest of the released (as was always *Vulnus extorreo Cascitatis.* before done) was fain to help at the seventh and last pull, at *Septima*, which, through straining, the blood ran down my cloathes. This, nevertheless, through joy I regarded not.

When the last draught, whereon the most of all hung, was finished, the Matron caused the cord to be laid away, and willed her aged son to declare her resolution to the rest *Magistra filius.* of the prisoners, who thus spoke unto them.

Ye children dear
 All present here,
 What is but now compleat and done
 Was long before resolved on ;
 Whate'er my mother of great grace
 To each on both sides here hath shown ;
 May never discontent misplace !
 The joyful time is drawing on